The Journal of Historical Review

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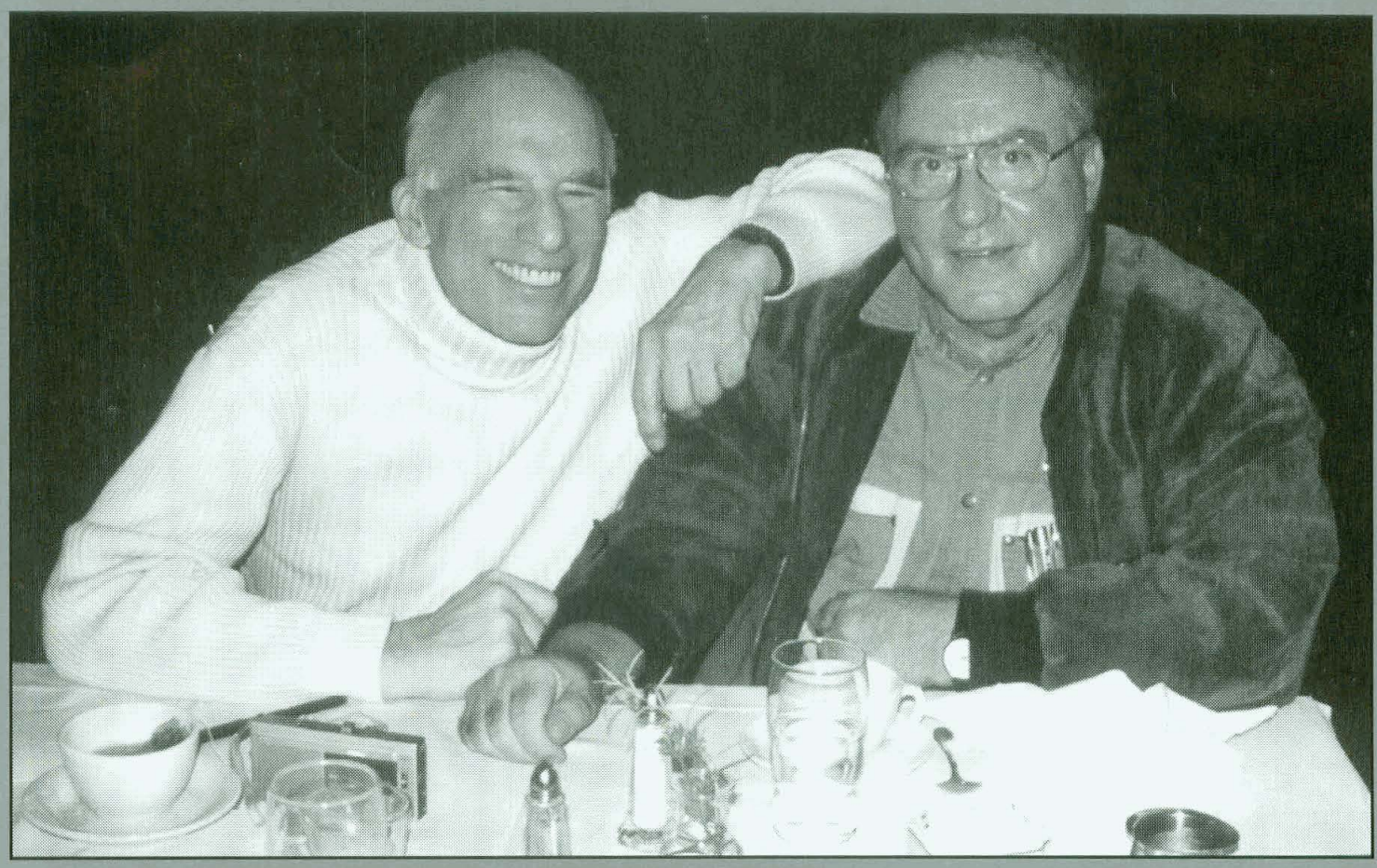

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Ernst Zündel

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Finkelstein's *The Holocaust Industry*
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Shermer and Grobman's *Denying History*
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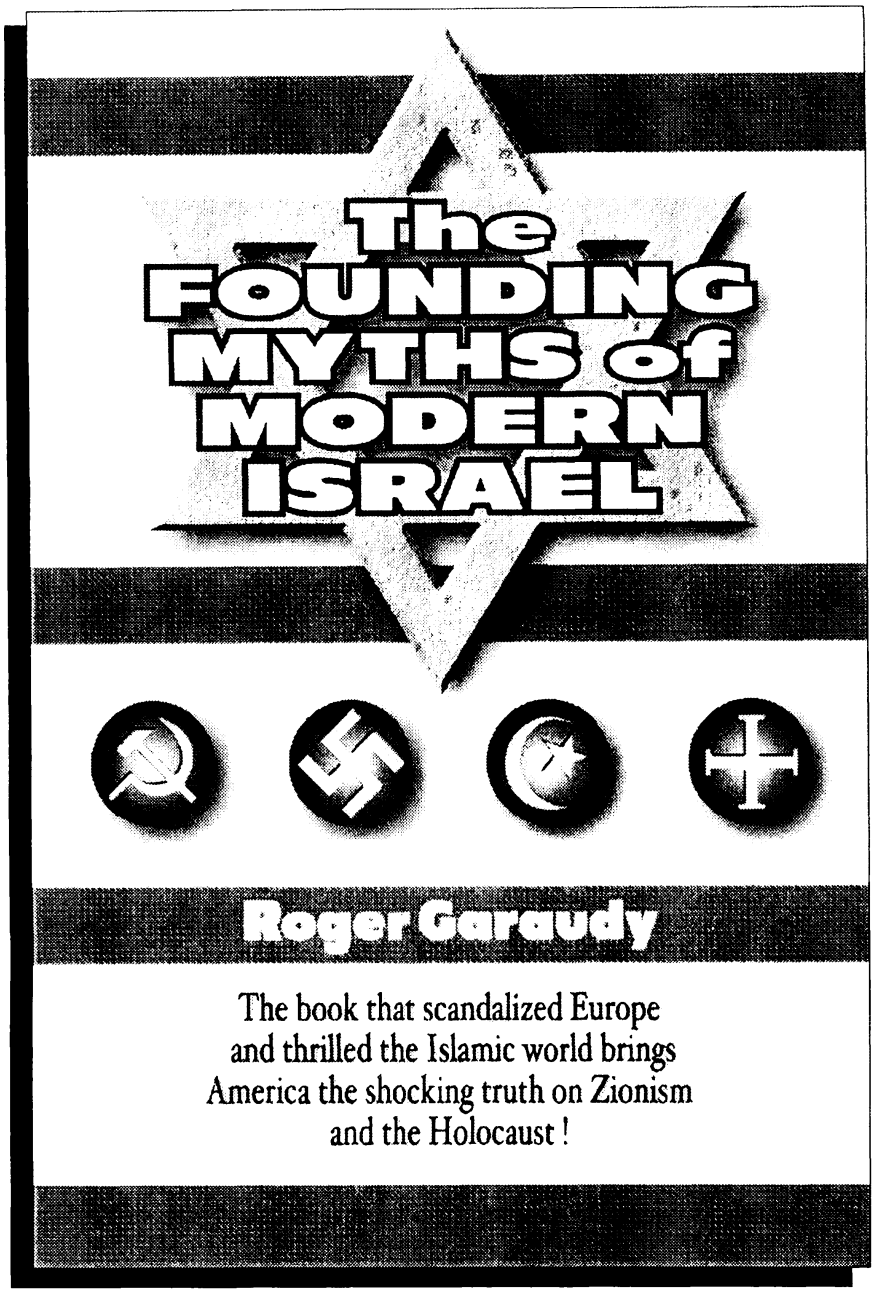
Evans's *Lying about Hitler*
Samuel Crowell

— And More —

Unmasking Zionism's Most Dangerous Myths


The FOUNDING MYTHS of MODERN ISRAEL
Roger Garaudy
The book that scandalized Europe
and thrilled the Islamic world brings
America the shocking truth on Zionism
and the Holocaust!

In this headline-making work, a prominent French scholar delivers one powerful blow after another to the pernicious historical myths cited for decades to justify Zionist aggression and repression, including the Israeli legend of a "land without people for a people without land," and the most sacred of Jewish-Zionist icons, the Holocaust extermination story.

For financial gain, as an alibi for indefensible policies, and for other reasons, Jews have used what the author calls "theological myths" to arrogate for themselves a "right of theological divine chosenness." The wartime suffering of Europe's Jews, he contends, has been elevated to the status of a secular religion, and is now treated with sacrosanct historical uniqueness.

This readable, thoroughly documented study examines the brutal dispossession and mass expulsion of Palestine's Arabs, exposes the farce of the Nuremberg victors' show trial, and shows that the notorious German "final solution" term referred to a "territorial" program of resettlement, not extermination. *Founding Myths* details the secret collaboration of prominent Jews with the young Nazi regime, and the 1941 offer by some Zionists, including a future Israeli prime minister, to join Hitler's Germany in a military alliance against Britain. The author presents a frank assessment of the powerful Jewish-Zionist lobby in the United States, showing how it effectively controls US policy regarding Israel, and plays a crucial role in shaping American public opinion.

For decades Roger Garaudy was prominent in the French Communist Party, making a name for himself as a Communist deputy in the French National Assembly, and as a leading Marxist intellectual and theoretician. Later he broke with Communism, eventually becoming a Muslim.

When *Founding Myths* first appeared in France, it touched off a storm of controversy among intellectuals and a furious uproar in the media. Soon Garaudy was charged with violating France's notorious Gayssot law, which makes it a crime to "contest" the "crimes against humanity" as defined by the Nuremberg Tribunal of 1945-46. A Paris court found him guilty and fined him $40,000. His trial and conviction for Holocaust heresy prompted wide international support, above all from across the Arab and Muslim world.

Relying on a vast range of Zionist, Soviet, American and German source references, this well-documented study is packed with hundreds of eye-opening quotations, many by prominent Jewish scholars and personalities.

Here, at last, this important work is available in a handsome, professionally edited English-language edition, with a valuable foreword by Theodore J. O'Keefe.

The Founding Myths of Modern Israel
by Roger Garaudy

Quality soft-cover. 230 pages. Source references. Index. (#0246)
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On the Cover: John Sack and Ernst Zündel relax at a Santa Monica restaurant after watching Errol Morris' *Mr. Death.* (Photo by Gordon Noice.)

The Journal of Historical Review (ISSN: 0195-6752) began publication in 1980. It upholds and continues the tradition of Historical Revisionism of scholars such as Harry Elmer Barnes, A. J. P. Taylor, William H. Chamberlin, Paul Rassinier and Charles Tansill. *The Journal of Historical Review* is published six times yearly by the Institute for Historical Review, P.O. Box 2739, Newport Beach, CA 92659. Subscription price: $40 per year, $65 for two years, and $90 for three years. For foreign subscriptions, add $20 per year. For overseas airmail delivery, add $40 per year. Remittances for subscriptions must be payable in US dollars drawable on a US bank. Donations to the IHR are tax-deductible.

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There are different kinds of revisionism, and different sorts of revisionists. That's no news to veteran revisionists. In fact, the diversity of opinion among revisionists has been far more troubling to the wardens of opinion on the Holocaust and other historical taboos than to the revisionist movement. Ernst Zündel's association with Jews such as Josef G. Burg and David Cole outraged the Holocaust police, not the revisionists.

This issue of the *Journal*, from its cover photo of Ernst Zündel and John Sack to its concluding review of Richard Evans' snarling attack on David Irving, will surely affront the high priests of the extermination cult. Containing as it does two feature articles by authors who avow their belief in gassings at Auschwitz, it will doubtless surprise many revisionists as well.

As it happens, both of these dissident revisionists, John Sack and Charles Provan, figured in a landmark article that appeared in the February 2001 issue of *Esquire*, as did Ernst Zündel, who is also featured in this issue. Sack, of course, wrote that article, based largely on his participation in the Institute of Historical Review's conference of May 2000. And while the JHR has criticized aspects of Sack's article (see "John Sack's Defective *Esquire* Article," Nov-Dec 2000 JHR), it was still a long stride forward in major media treatment of Holocaust revisionism: for the first time revisionists were portrayed as persecuted, rather than as persecutors, and as humane and tolerant, to boot.

The tolerance that allows revisionists to give a fair hearing to their adversaries is far from a flabby indulgence. On the same day that the chummy photo that graces our cover was taken, Ernst Zündel and John Sack could be overheard at IHR's offices jousting wholeheartedly on the Holocaust, the origins of the Second World War, the Jewish involvement in Communism, and John Sack's book *An Eye for Eye*. There was no sacrifice of either civility or passion: tolerance need not mean stifling criticism, abiding untruth, or abandoning the relentless search for facts.

World-class journalist John Sack has written many controversial stories in his fifty years of journalism, but, as he relates here, none as controversial as the story of those Jews who ran postwar concentration camps for Germans. Himself Jewish, Sack tells of his struggle to research, write, publish, and promote that story in the face of stonewalling by Yad Vashem, censorship at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, and attacks from major Jewish organizations — a toughening that stands him in good stead here as he runs a gauntlet of polite but skeptical questioners at IHR's conference.

Freelance researcher Charles Provan, whom Ernst Zündel calls "a revisionist who believes in the gas chambers," has found important new documents on a key Auschwitz witness, Dr. Miklos Nyiszli, just when it seemed that revisionist researchers had said the last word on the Hungarian pathologist. Provan suggests a "novel" solution to the inconsistencies and absurdities in Nyiszli's testimony. His solution may trouble the Auschwitz orthodox more than it does revisionists.

Revisionists tend to think of Ernst Zündel as more a warrior than a diplomat, but in this issue the victor in the Toronto Holocaust trials urges that revisionists be tolerant: not only of our adversaries, but of ourselves. In his address to IHR's May 2000 conference, Ernst shows several of his many sides: transcontinental publisher of revisionist research; Prospero of worldwide revisionist outreach; spin doctor on the Irving trial; and prophet of the present Palestinian revolt.

It has been a while since the *Journal* ran dual reviews of one book, yet, like Arno Mayer's *Why Did the Heavens Not Darken?*, reviewed by both Arthur Butz and Robert Faurisson in the fall 1989 JHR, Peter Novick's *Holocaust in American Life* is that rare book from the historical establishment that merits extended consideration. After Greg Raven and former academic Samuel Crowell mine Novick's jaundiced study for its many implications and admissions, Crowell examines Norman Finkelstein's still more acidulous *Holocaust Industry*. Then Crowell dissects two books that testify to the establishment's increasingly dishevelled efforts to counter and to contain Holocaust revisionism, Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman's *Denying History* and Richard Evans's post-Irving trial *Lying about History*.

This issue of the *Journal of Historical Review* marks an editorial changing of the guard that signifies both growth and continuity. As the Institute of Historical Review builds and expands in the aftermath of the long Carto wars, IHR director Mark Weber, who since 1992 has edited this journal to the highest standard, finds himself compelled to devote all of his considerable talents to his directorial duties. I shall devote my energies and my experience as editor of the JHR (1988-1992) to upholding that standard.

Theodore J. O'Keefe

World Revisionist Conference Banned in Lebanon under Jewish Pressure

Whoever doubted the social-political importance of Holocaust revisionism could doubt it no more following the success of frantic efforts this March by Jewish groups, supported by the U.S. government, to ban a peaceful, privately organized revisionist meeting in Lebanon.

Caving in to pressure from the State Department and powerful Zionist organizations, the Lebanese government banned the much-publicized "Revisionism and Zionism" conference nine days before it was to begin in Beirut. Scholars, researchers, and activists from a range of countries had been set to address the four-day meeting, which was to take place March 31 through April 3. Organized by the Swiss group Vérité et Justice ("Truth and Justice"), in cooperation with the Institute for Historical Review, the revisionist historical conference would have been the first in an Arab country. It was meant to reflect and further strengthen the growing cooperation between independent scholars in Europe, the United States, and Middle East countries.

Among those scheduled to address the conference were:

- Robert Faurisson, Europe's leading revisionist scholar, repeatedly persecuted by French authorities for his views.
- Roger Garaudy, prominent French scholar, author of *The Founding Myths of Modern Israel* (published in the U.S. by the IHR), for which he was fined $40,000 by a Paris court in 1998.
- Horst Mahler, noted German attorney and author.
- Jürgen Graf, Vérité et Justice director, who was sentenced by a Swiss court in 1998 to fifteen months imprisonment for "Holocaust denial," then chose exile rather than serving the politically motivated sentence.
- Fredrick Töben, Ph.D., director of the Adelaide Institute in Australia.
- Henri Roques, French scholar and author of *The "Confessions" of Kurt Gerstein*.
- Mark Weber, American historian and IHR director.
- Oleg Platonov, Russian historian.
- Robert Countess, Ph.D., American educator, writer, and publisher.

A dozen reporters had registered to cover the event, including writers for *Newsweek* and the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, and journalists from the United States, Lebanon, Egypt, Britain, Germany, Austria, and Sweden.

Weeks before the conference was to begin, three influential Jewish groups — the World Jewish Congress, the Anti-Defamation League, and the Simon Wiesenthal Center — publicly demanded that Lebanese authorities ban it.

Typical was a declaration by the Anti-Defamation League, which mendaciously claimed that this "anti-Semitic and racist" meeting of "Holocaust deniers" would promote "hatred" in the Middle East. (The ADL has been in the news recently for its role in persuading President Clinton to pardon fugitive felon Marc Rich, who had given $250,000 to the Jewish group.)

In line with the Jewish effort, the U.S. government brought covert pressure on the Lebanese to ban the meeting, as the Beirut daily *As-Safir* revealed on March 3. The paper's seasoned Washington correspondent reported that the State Department had warned Lebanese officials of harmful consequences for their country if they did not prohibit the meeting. Washington's pressure was brought to bear on Lebanon's ambassador in Washington, and also conveyed by the American ambassador in Beirut and certain some U.S. Congressmen.

On learning of the *As-Safir* report (which other newspapers later independently confirmed), the IHR immediately contacted the State Department's public affairs bureau for an explanation. Although an official named Greg Sullivan promised to look into the matter and quickly respond, in spite of numerous follow-up calls and letters he never did.

The IHR strongly denounced the campaign to prohibit the conference, stressing that the peaceful, privately organized meeting would be entirely legal in most countries, including the United States. Similar meetings hosted by the IHR have been held peacefully in the U.S. for over twenty years, IHR director Weber pointed out. "People everywhere," he said, "should have the right to investigate and make up their own minds about twentieth century history, including 'the Holocaust,' free of censorship and intimidation. Lebanese are entitled to the same standard of freedom of speech and expression as people in other countries."

The Zionist groups behind the campaign, said Weber, "betray an arrogant double standard. That these Jewish groups, ardent supporters of Israel's oppressive and criminal policies, should demand anything of Lebanon, a country that has repeatedly been a victim of

Zionist aggression, is an expression of brazen arrogance."

The campaign to ban the revisionist history meeting "underscores the need for precisely such a conference. It shows, once again, how greatly Zionist groups fear open debate about 'the Holocaust,' which is a major weapon in the Israeli-Zionist arsenal. This ban points up the fragile and mendacious character of what even a few courageous Jewish scholars are aptly calling the 'Holocaust cult' and the 'Holocaust industry.'"

The conference ban, said Vérité et Justice in a statement, "dramatically demonstrates how a small group manipulates public opinion, thereby depriving the public of its legitimate right to know." Behind the cancellation, the statement continued, are "the Zionists who, thanks to their iron grip on the media of the West, have succeeded for more than five decades in imposing their distortions of history on the world. They control, to a large extent, newspapers, books, films, theater, and even universities. This control has enabled them to brainwash the broad public, which unknowingly accepts many Zionist legends and downright lies as indisputable historical facts. The so-called 'Holocaust' is but the most extreme example."

Washington's secretive campaign to ban the Beirut conference is "hypocritical and bullying," said Weber, who also called the Lebanese government ban "an outrageous assault against freedom of speech and expression."

Although the conference cancellation was a disappointment and a setback, the organizational effort was not in vain. The widespread media attention it generated boosted international awareness of Holocaust revisionism, including the work and impact of the Institute for Historical Review. While most press coverage was unfriendly, even hostile, some reports — seemingly reflecting a steady tread — were remarkably objective. A number of articles respectfully quoted IHR spokesmen on a basis of parity with spokesmen for well-entrenched Jewish groups.

In a statement made public in mid-March, fourteen Arab intellectuals condemned the Beirut conference and called on Lebanese authorities to ban it. But the widely publicized declaration soon proved something of an embarrassment for its backers. Edward Said, a prominent Palestine-born scholar who teaches at Columbia University, repudiated the statement two weeks later, saying that he had been deceived about its content. He explained that he had never, in fact, approved any call to ban the conference. Another signer, Elias Khoury, expressed embarrassment that the statement was hailed by Israel's ambassador to France.

Further information about the "Revisionism and Zionism" conference, including numerous press reports on the campaign to ban it, is posted on the "Beirut 2001" section of the IHR web site: http://ihr.org

Around the globe, awareness is growing of the importance of the Holocaust story as a key propaganda tool of Israeli-Zionist interests. Ever more Europeans, for example, understand how Israel and Zionist groups exploit "the Holocaust" to blackmail countries and corporations for billions of dollars for Israel and Zionist organizations, and to excuse otherwise inexcusable policies of the Jewish state.

This growing awareness has been transmitted to the Middle East, above all as a consequence of the 1998 trial in Paris of the prominent French Muslim scholar Roger Garaudy, who was fined $40,000 for his book *The Founding Myths of Modern Israel*, which presents compelling evidence refuting the orthodox Holocaust story and other historical legends. (An attractive American edition is published by the IHR.)

Iran's official radio voice to the world, IRIB, has in recent years expressed support for Holocaust revisionism by broadcasting sympathetic interviews with leading revisionist scholars and activists. Several interviews with IHR Director Mark Weber have been aired on the English-language service, and similar interviews have been broadcast with Ernst Zündel in German and with Ahmed Rami in Arabic. IRIB short-wave radio reaches millions in the Middle East, Europe, and Asia.

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If you believe in the Institute for Historical Review and its fight for freedom and truth in history, please remember the IHR in your will or designate the IHR as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy. It can make all the difference.

If you have already mentioned the Institute in your will or life insurance policy, or if you would like further information, please let us know.

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The Thought Heard 'Round the World

Greg Raven

Even though seven years have elapsed since the Internet burst into prominence in 1994 due to the addition of the "World Wide Web" (often abbreviated "WWW") to electronic mail ("e-mail"), file transfer, and other existing features, it is difficult to know whether this is the wave of the future, a passing fad, or a stepping-stone to something yet to come. One thing certain is that revisionist materials on the Internet drive anti-revisionists crazy.

The *Journal* has covered efforts by governments to silence revisionists. If these attempts to regulate freedom of speech are successful, then the Internet cannot survive, and freedom of speech everywhere is threatened. However, the premise, that the laws of one country should be used to determine Internet content in other countries, is ludicrous, and almost certainly will lead to the downfall of efforts to control Internet content; imagine Muslim countries attempting to control the Internet because pornography is available, or the Communist Chinese because some Web sites publicize human rights abuses.

Discussions and Debates

Before the World Wide Web made the Internet so popular, electronic presentations of revisionist viewpoints were confined to computer systems of which one had to be a member. Non-members had no way of following discussions, and material presented on one computer system would not appear on any other computer system without someone laboriously copying it.

Now, virtually anyone who can connect to the Internet can view revisionist materials, and participate in discussions and debates with others interested in revisionism. The longest-running and most active of these forums is alt.revisionism, an Internet discussion area (technically, a "newsgroup") that allows visitors to read existing messages, respond to topics of interest, and post new messages. Discussions are free-wheeling, to say the least, and are often larded with the type of personal attacks that tend to surface when one is not face-to-face with one's target.

There are also moderated discussion areas. Although typically moderators do not allow participants to express revisionist viewpoints, even so, it can be worthwhile to monitor discussion areas such as this to keep up with the current trends in establishment historiography.

Greg Raven maintains the IHR's Web site at http://ihr.org.

Electronic Messages

It is difficult to overstate the extent to which e-mail (electronic mail, most often sent over the Internet) facilitates communication. It does not matter whether your message is going to the next-door neighbor or to a far continent, delivery is free, and in many cases, almost instantaneous. In addition, one message can be sent to dozens or even hundreds of recipients simultaneously with a few keystrokes, eliminating printing costs, envelope stuffing, and postage expenses.

These characteristics have been a boon to revisionists. Revisionists major and minor around the world use mass e-mail to keep other revisionists up-to-date on breaking news and developments. Recipients can easily (and often do) "forward" copies of received messages to others, so that in a matter of hours revisionist news can move around the globe at a speed that makes fax machines look antiquated.

Registration for the recent (since cancelled) revisionist conference in Beirut was greatly facilitated by e-mail, as messages from speakers, participants, and journalists flooded into the IHR, where they were answered and sent back within twenty-four hours. Without e-mail, pulling together such a diverse group of persons from dozens of countries around the world would have been next to impossible.

If receiving streams of revisionist material every day is a problem because you live in a country where such material is forbidden, it is trivially easy to obtain a free e-mail account under an alias. These accounts have the additional advantage that they allow retrieval of messages from just about any computer anywhere in the world. Even if you are on the move, you don't have to be out of touch with the revisionist community.

The Web

The utilitarian nature of other Internet features notwithstanding, the multi-media capabilities of the Web are what is driving the explosion in interest in the Internet. In 1994,when IHR material first appeared on the Web, there were relatively little few Web sites in existence, and not much other interesting material. The

growth in the intervening years has been dramatic, to the point that now, newcomers to the Web take for granted that whatever they are seeking is available somewhere, and usually for free. Library card catalogs (including that of the Library of Congress), historical documents, and out-of-print books are all available on the Web. Today, the average Internet user has more news and information at his fingertips than editors at major metropolitan daily newspapers had ten years ago.

The integration of Web materials and e-mail capabilities make it possible for any Internet user to act as a "clipping service," e-mailing others magazine and newspaper articles, and other Web materials, without having to retype them. To use the Beirut Conference as an example once again, articles in the Arab-language press were picked up by Arabic-speaking IHR associates from Web sites in the Middle East, translated into English, and e-mailed to the IHR, where they were available the next day on our Web site in translation.

With dozens of supporters around the world sending electronic "clippings" every day, not every clipping is going to be germane. Even so, those materials that cannot be used by the IHR are often forwarded electronically to others for use elsewhere.

Simple and Effective

Without the Internet, the control of the mass media by groups and individuals hostile to historical truth would doom a small publisher such as the IHR to eking out an existence on the fringe. With a well-designed and highly visible Web site (www.ihr.org), the IHR can be on nearly equal footing with huge organizations such as the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Simon Wiesenthal Center in making material available to the average computer user.

This has led to an increasing number of citations of revisionist Web sites in articles dealing with historical topics such as the Holocaust. Not only does the IHR Web site allow journalists from around the world to quickly and easily contact the IHR, it allows their readers to quickly find and peruse revisionist materials, so they can make up their own minds about historical events.

The Shoah: Fictive Images and Mere Belief?

ROBERT FAURISSON

The photography exposition "Mémoire des camps," currently on view in Paris at the seventeenth century palace known as the Hôtel de Sully, is stirring disquiet in some Jewish circles. This exposition, from which care has been taken to eliminate a few too obvious fakes, renders all the more stark, in our materialist age of the image, of photography and television, the absence of any photograph and of any material element which might prove that the Jews were, during the 1939–1945 war, "victims of an industrially planned extermination." The last six words are those of Jacques Mandelbaum, a staff writer at the daily *Le Monde*. In an article entitled "La Shoah et ces images qui nous manquent" ("The Shoah and those images we lack," January 25, 2001, p.17), the journalist does not conceal his perplexity.

Mandelbaum writes that "no [true] images describing this crime are available." He speaks, with regard to Auschwitz, of Soviet "propaganda pictures," adding:

> Some of these [Soviet propaganda] pictures were nonetheless reused later as authentic archival documents. All the known images concerning this crime are thus, if not false, at least inappropriate. Including, and perhaps especially, those of the heaps of corpses discovered in the concentration camps, the spectacular horror of which is still far from the reality.

He reminds the reader that it is precisely because of the non-existence of real images that it has been "possible to produce images by way of fiction," and he thinks that fiction "is in the process of winning out." The organizers of the exposition go so far as to assert, as has Jean-Claude Pressac, that this or that photograph was taken from inside an Auschwitz gas chamber. Skeptical, the journalist asks: "From a gas chamber or from another building?"

Despite the objections voiced by revisionists, cer-

Robert Faurisson's trailblazing essay "Le 'problème des chambres à gaz,'" first appeared in *Le Monde* in 1978.

tain authors have dared to claim that, in the 1944 photographs taken by Allied pilots from high above the Auschwitz complex, the buildings containing the homicidal gas chambers could be discerned. Mandelbaum notes that, in these photographs, all "things existing at Auschwitz can be deciphered, except the presence of the gas chambers." He returns to "the insufferable lack of [authentic] images of the extermination," and he mentions a dispute amongst exterminationist authors "literally haunted by the near-total absence of photos relating to the extermination." In passing, he assails "the ineptness of the [exposition's] organizers."

In sum, this Shoah, the historical character of which Mandelbaum of course upholds, is at present reduced, on the one hand, to fictive images (he writes "images largely inappropriate") and, on the other hand, to a belief, itself founded on fictive images.

Mandelbaum concludes:

> If seeing is believing, how can it be admitted henceforth that, with regard to the Shoah, the [authentic] image is precisely what is lacking?

This last question, which is clear, and the other quoted remarks, which are not without punch, have been wrested with much difficulty from the fuzzy mass of Mandelbaum's article. The journalist, writing in a yeshiva-style French, employs numerous contortions of language. He strives systematically to save the Holocaustic bacon, and also, perhaps, to leave an eventual escape route for himself and his newspaper — whereupon *Le Monde*, come the day when the myth of the Shoah needs scuttling, will be able to pride itself on Mandelbaum's article and on a few others just as oblique.

More than twenty years ago, Pierre Vidal-Naquet and his co-religionists began to beat a retreat in the face of the revisionist upsurge, disowning some of the more blatant lies of their own propaganda. Over the years, they have made a habit of attributing such deceptive inventions to the Communists, the Russians, or the Poles. In this case, it is clear that *Le Monde*'s journalist is imputing the counterfeit coin of Auschwitz to the Soviets.

January 25, 2001

FIRST PERSON

At the Tolerance Museum

MacKenzie Paine

Teaching tolerance through "Holocaust education" in the public schools is now the law in cities, counties, and states across America. As revisionists are well aware, the standard account of the Jewish Holocaust taught in such courses is more than dubious. So too are the controversial methods, including "role playing" and similar types of psychological manipulation. But does Holocaust education really promote tolerance?

I recently had the opportunity to answer that question for myself when I visited the Simon Wiesenthal Center's Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles. And, since it is our children who are now the chief targets of "Holocaust education," I took my own two sons with me to gauge the museum's impact, and their reactions.

Prior to our visit, I interviewed my sons on things the Museum of Tolerance regards as key issues for elementary school pupils. Their innocence was evident. They had no concept of Jewishness, were aware of no people or nation that was inherently evil, and knew of Hitler and the Nazis only what they had seen in Hollywood movies. They are both fifth-graders who attend a Catholic school in Mexico, and their outlook is entirely appropriate for their ages and life experience.

On a dreary Sunday morning in early March, we joined the long line for the Museum of Tolerance. Germar Rudolf, visiting town to discuss his role as an expert witness in David Irving's upcoming appeal, accompanied us. We waited, along with dozens of school groups, as each visitor was subjected to a security procedure more searching than any airport or border check I've ever experienced.

After a short explanation of how the tour would proceed, we were pointed toward two large doors. Above them, bright red neon signs designated one door "Not-Prejudiced," the other, "Prejudiced." On a nearby video, a rather sarcastic actor challenged the visitors to consider whether or not they were prejudiced. Then

MacKenzie Paine battles intolerance disguised as tolerance from a dusty hilltop in Mexico.

each of us was instructed to choose the door that matched our attitudes. As the already humbled mass ambled herd-like toward the "Prejudiced" portal, I opted to try the "Not-Prejudiced" door. It couldn't be opened — it was fake. So began the brainwashing of yet another group of young Americans.

The first part of the tour is an emotional barrage of film clips and still photos showing racial strife, riots, and suffering Third World children. There may have been a European-American pictured without a Ku Klux Klan robe, but if there was I missed it. It hurt to see my sons viewing such violence and carnage, so I tried to rush them through as quickly as possible.

Then came the feature presentation, the Holocaust exhibit. The tour is self-guided; so there is no one to ask questions of, no one to challenge. The visitors simply go from one grayish display of mannequins and recorded "conversations" to another. All of them "explain" the political environment of 1930s Germany, without the least attempt at balance or accuracy. As Germar dryly commented after the causes of the Second World War had been neatly packed into a three-minute explanation, "They forgot to mention the Russian Revolution."

The third part of the tour is an emotional assault on the psyche. I watched my two sons gulp, their eyes wide, as they viewed the usual photographs of heaps of corpses and listened to recorded descriptions of diesel gassings, viewed photographs "ordinary" Germans said to have helped the Nazis shoot Jewish civilians, black and white films of people carrying all of their worldly belongings, and more. All of these images flash across multiple screens in a darkened room, and the students absorb them like sponges.

Then came the grand finale, a forty-five minute lecture from Elizabeth Mann, a self-professed Holocaust survivor, to a now traumatized roomful of students and teachers. At the end of her monologue I asked Mrs. Mann why she had told so many impressionable young people that the Germans made soap out of Jewish corpses during the Second World War, when even the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum says that wasn't so. She responded that she disagreed with the USHMM. How's that? Differences of opinion are one thing, but arguing for a heinous accusation that has never been substantiated, and is dismissed by virtually all historians as false, is quite another. But this was lost on the students.

I next asked Mrs. Mann why she had told her audience that the "gas chamber" at Auschwitz was a dual-purpose shower room, which could be converted into a homicidal gas chamber with the flip of a switch. The lethal gas, she had told us, came out of the showerheads. When I pointed out that all the "orthodox" Holocaust literature on Auschwitz describes only rooms into which the poison was dropped — in granules — through windows or holes in the roof, the room erupted into hisses and boos. Mrs. Mann, saved by the booing, made no response.

Once outside the lecture hall, the students called me over to ask me how I could possibly question such a sweet, elderly woman who had suffered so much. They accused me of calling her a liar. I was happy to explain to them, as a mother to her children, that I hadn't accused Mrs. Mann of lying. I had simply questioned some of the things that she had said. I looked out into the group and could see fear in some of the faces, as if they were being confronted by a lunatic with a gun, and I beseeched them to visit the USHMM's Internet Web site and read for themselves what that museum's authorities say about the soap libel, and about gassing at Auschwitz. When one of the teenagers asked me how I knew that soap wasn't made at Auschwitz, Germar, identifying himself as a chemist, told them calmly that it would have been physically impossible to make soap out of human fat in the buildings at Auschwitz. There had been no facilities for such an undertaking.

With each of our responses the group became more unruly, sarcastic, and intolerant. Rather than ask responsible questions or make clear arguments, at last they resorted to taunting us, calling Germar a Nazi and telling us to "f___ off." They frightened my sons, so we left, but not before they ended their outburst by chasing our van out of the underground parking lot. Their teacher was helpless to stop them, although she tried.

My sons and I learned a lesson at the Museum of Tolerance, a lesson about intolerance — taxpayer-funded, state-sanctioned intolerance — not merely of Germans and Christians and European-Americans, but also of intellectual curiosity and reasoned dissent. While I was able to "de-program" my sons with some healthy discussion and simple logic, I'm one of the fortunate few who have heard the revisionist side. If that angry mob of teenagers is indicative of the effect Holocaust studies have on our children, America risks schooling a generation in bigotry.

Behind *An Eye for An Eye*
Revenge, Hate and History

JOHN SACK

THREE YEARS AGO I WAS SCHEDULED TO SPEAK at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The speech was announced in this brochure and also on the Internet. But then the Museum canceled it.

For the next forty-five minutes, I'll say *here* what I'd planned to say at the Holocaust Museum, and then, just as I'd have done at the Museum, I'll stay here as long as you'd like, answering questions. The audience at the Museum would have been historians, mostly, and I'd have said something like ...

Thank you. Thank you for inviting me, thank you for *listening* to me. What I'm going to talk about happened fifty years ago. And for fifty years, no one, no historian, no one at *all* has spoken about it in public anywhere in the world. Not until now.

Now myself, I'm not an historian, I'm a reporter. And what I write is the raw material of history, something that historians will — I hope — someday make some sense of. I go places. I watch events. I listen to people. And then I tell stories. And I'll start by telling one now. A true story about a teenage girl.

Lola

Blonde hair, brown eyes, very pretty. In high school she's doing the flying rings, trapeze, acting in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.* She's one of the title characters. She comes home. She's skipping through the streets singing, "On the Good Ship Lollipop ..." Not exactly. She's really singing [in accented English], "On the Good Ship Lollipop ..." Because she's a Polish girl, and she's in Bedzin, Poland, in the 1930s. Her name is Lola Potok.

And when she's 18 years old, the Nazis invade. Lola is put on a train to the town of Oswiecim — we know it as Auschwitz. Her baby, one year old, is ripped from her arms; she never sees the baby again. She isn't sent to the cyanide chamber, but her mother is. Her mother is killed, her brother and sister, nieces and nephews are killed. Fourteen people.

(You know, I wasn't going to say this at the Holocaust Museum, but in this particular room I know there are people who don't believe there were cyanide cham-

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John Sack is one of America's most eminent literary journalists. His reporting over more than half a century, from North and South America, Europe, Africa, and Asia, has appeared in such periodicals as *Harper's, The Atlantic,* and *The New Yorker.* He has been a war correspondent in Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, and Yugoslavia, as well as CBS News bureau chief in Spain. He is the author of nine non-fiction books, including *M, Lieutenant Calley: His Story,* and *Company C,* as well as *An Eye for an Eye* (available from the IHR). The founding editor of *Esquire* magazine has compared his writing to that of F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernst Hemingway. For more about Sack and his career, see his Web site: *http://www.johnsack.com.*

This essay, slightly edited, was presented on May 29, 2000, at the 13th IHR conference. For more about his travails with the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, see "Suppressing the Story of Genocide Against Germans," in the Sept.-Oct. 1997 *Journal.* "Inside the Bunker," a lengthy article by Sack based on his participation at the 13th IHR Conference, appeared in the February 2001 issue of *Esquire.*

bers at Auschwitz. I believe, and Lola believes, there were cyanide chambers at Auschwitz.)

Her mother was killed. Her brother and sister, nieces and nephews were killed. Fourteen people. The one brother at Auschwitz who's still alive stands on the gallows and says in Yiddish, "Nem nekumah! Take revenge!" Then he's hanged.

Revenge

In January 1945, Lola escapes. She weighs sixty-six pounds. Her eyes are hollow. Her hair is this short. Her back has been broken. Her hand is mangled. She's wearing two left shoes. All the people she loves are dead, or she *thinks* so, and she is just *bursting* with hate. She wants to release that hate, to spew it onto the Germans. One of her childhood friends is in the Polish government, and Lola goes to him and tells him, "I want revenge."

And two months later the war is still going on, and Lola is now in Germany, the part occupied by the Russians and administered by the Poles. Lola's in an olive-colored uniform. On her jacket are brass buttons. On her collar, what the GIs call scrambled eggs. On her shoulders are stars. On her hip is a Luger. Lola is working for the Polish government, she is the commandant of a prison for Germans, and she is attempting to take revenge for the Holocaust.

Now, Lola is a Jewish girl. She's studied the Torah, and the Torah says, "You shall not take revenge." Lola knows that. She's disobeying that. But is there any of us here who'd condemn her? Any of us who can't understand her? I can understand her, and I can have *rachmanis*, compassion, for her.

I met Lola Potok. It was in April 1986. I'm living in Hollywood. I'm a writer, and I have a meeting at Paramount. And the secretary there, she's reading something I wrote about the Billionaire Boys Club. She tells me, "I like it. It reminds me of my family."

I say, "The Billionaire Boys Club? Your family?" Secretary says, "Yes, all those murders. My mother, Lola, was at Auschwitz." I say, "Oh." Secretary says, "And after that, my mother commanded a prison full of Nazis." I say, "*What*? She commanded ..." I say, "Do you know there's a movie there?" I say, "You should tell Lynda," Lynda is the producer, the secretary's boss, but the secretary tells me, "I *know* there's a movie. I *won't* tell Lynda. I want to produce it myself!"

There's a saying in Hollywood: a producer is someone, *anyone*, who knows a writer. I'm a writer, the secretary knows me, and therefore she's a producer. We're in business together. The deal is, I'll write a magazine article on Lola, her mother, and the secretary will make a movie from it.

Cut. A few days later. Hollywood, the Moustache Cafe. I'm having spinach crepe. I'm having dinner with Lola. An elegant woman. Coral lipstick, black eyeliner, like on a femme fatale. Speaks five languages fluently. She's sixty-six years old. And Lola starts telling me her story.

Gleiwitz

At the end of World War II, she tells me, she commanded a prison in Gleiwitz, Germany. She says the inmates were German soldiers. But she says some were Nazis, even SS, *pretending* to be German soldiers, and Lola was looking for them. Looking for Höss and Hössler, the commandants at Auschwitz. Looking for Mengele, the man who once said to her mother, "Go left, you die"; who said to Lola, "Go right, you live." And if Lola ever found him, she didn't know what she'd do. But she'd do it.

And Lola tells me: One day in her prison she found a Gestapo man. Fat, forty years old. Under his arm was a tattoo. It said A or B. It was his blood type. Everyone in the Gestapo had it. Lola freaked out. She started screaming, "Du schmutziges Schwein! Du verfluchtes Schwein! Du ... How many Jews did you kill?" She slapped him. The man was down on the floor. He was hugging her boots, saying, "Gnade! Gnade! Have mercy on me!," and Lola was kicking him and kicking ...

This story of Lola's: Is there anyone here who likes it? I didn't like it. I didn't want to write it. I thought it was ugly. Lola didn't like it. She told me her mother, if she were alive, wouldn't like it. Her mother used to read to her from the Torah and tell her, "You mustn't hate. It only hurts you. It corrodes your soul."

And Lola said that after some months in Gleiwitz, she remembered this. She was in the prison one day. And there was a Jewish guard there. His face was red. His teeth were bare. There was spit on his teeth. Ugly, ugly. The man had a whip. He was screaming in Polish, "You son of a whore." He was whipping a German prisoner. Lola said, "Stop." Lola said, "Why are you whipping him?" The man said, "Well, the Germans did it to me!" Lola said, "And now you hate them?" The man said, "I *despise* them!" Lola said, "Well, if you despise them, why do you want to be *like* them?" Because to Lola, to *Lola*, this man, this Jew, he looked, talked, acted just like the Nazis she'd known at Auschwitz.

At that time, Lola didn't care about the Germans,

the German prisoners. They could have dropped dead for all she cared. But she told me she cared about the Jewish guard. For years the Nazis had called him a pig, a dog, and if now he'd truly become a beast, then who had won, the Jew or the Nazis? So according to Lola, she called all the guards to her office and said to them that from now on, we'll treat the Germans like human beings. And from then on, Lola told me, that's what she did.

Writing Lola's Story

Now, this story I liked. If it was true, this was a story worth telling. I had this dream: maybe the Serbs and Croats will read it, the Irish Catholics and Protestants will read it, the Hutus and Tutsis, the Israelis and Palestinians ... Maybe they'll read it, and maybe they'll learn, as Lola did, that to hate your neighbors may or may not destroy them, but it does destroy *yourself*. And maybe these people will stop their revenge, stop their genocide.

We Jews always say of the Holocaust, "Never again. Never again will people hurt us simply because we are Jews." But Lola was apparently saying, "Yes, and never again will I hurt a *German* simply because he's a German." Fifty years ago, Lola was apparently saying, "Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me." This story I wanted very much to write. So ...

I start interviewing Lola. At the Inn of the Seventh Ray in Los Angeles. At a Jewish cemetery in New Jersey. On the Champs Elysées in Paris. I interview Lola on and off for two-and-a-half years. Her memories just pour out, and she also introduces me to a dozen other people, all Jews: people who knew her in Gleiwitz, prison guards in Gleiwitz, even the man who appointed her the commandant in Gleiwitz.

I write a twenty-page article on Lola's revenge and Lola's redemption. Lola reads it and likes it. The story runs in *California* magazine. Lola, at her own expense, comes to Washington to promote it on National Public Radio. The story is sold internationally, and it's reprinted in *Best Magazine Articles, 1988*. We have movie offers. Bette Midler and Suzanne Somers want to play the Lola part.

And then I write a book proposal. I write, "It's Lola's redemption, not Lola's revenge, that this book's about." I'll go to Germany. I'll find some prisoners maybe. I'll go to Poland. I'll find some more guards, maybe. I'll write a book. The title will be *Lola*. And in August 1988, the publisher Henry Holt in New York City says, "Okay! We want it!" Good news, and I phone it to Lola.

And Lola on the telephone says, "Listen, John, I don't want you to write it." I say, "Lola? Lola, this is the first time you've told that to me." I say, "Lola, we signed a contract." We had signed one. Lola had written, "I grant you the exclusive right to write and to publish a book about my life."

Threats

That night I go to Lola's apartment in Hollywood. Anyone here ever been in an encounter group? Remember your first night? Everyone shouting and screaming. You're just sitting there stupefied. You're thinking, "What is going *on*?" Well, I'm in Lola's condo. Lola is saying, "Lookit, John. I don't like the way you write. You write like a *reporter*. If you start writing this book, I will stop you. I will *stop* you!"

Lola's daughter is there. She's saying, "John, give it up. I'm begging you to give it up. John! Give it up!" Another daughter of Lola's is there. She's a lawyer, and she says, "John! You're going to have instantaneous and very expensive litigation!" Lola's saying, "I'll go to court." The daughter's saying, "John, I want you to sign this release. John! Sign the release!" The other daughter's saying, "John! Just leave us! Just go!" Lola's saying, "John! Get out of our lives!"

I leave. I telephone Lola but she doesn't answer. I write her, but she sends the letters back, unopened, inscribed "refused."

And not just Lola. Lola's second-in-command at the prison in Gleiwitz was Moshe, also a Jew. He won't talk to me. His wife on the telephone says, "We don't give you the permission to write this." I say, "I ... You ..." That's what I say, "I ... You ... One doesn't *need* permission!" I *have* permission, from the Constitution of the United States. Moshe's wife hangs up.

And then there is Jadzia, also a Jew, she was one of Lola's guards in Gleiwitz. Jadzia says on the telephone, "I was never in Gleiwitz!" Then she says, "Yes, I was in Gleiwitz, but I'll never talk about it!" And then she talks for an hour saying, "I don't know nothing, nothing, nothing, nothing. Nothing! Nothing!"

People won't talk to me. People tell other people, "Don't talk to John Sack." People talk to me, and they lie to me. People say they'll sue me, they'll destroy me, they'll *kill* me. One man takes my driver's license, writes down my address, and says, "If you write about me, I will call the Israeli Mafia."

Here's some advice. Never tell a reporter, "You'd better not write this." I have a contract with Henry Holt. I've made a promise to Henry Holt. I keep my promises.

Doing the Research

In April 1989, I fly to Germany. I go to this castle, this concrete castle, high on a hill above the Rhine. It's the German Federal Archives, and they've got forty thousand statements there by Germans who lived in what now is Poland during World War II. The statements of course are in German, in German script, and I find five statements from Germans who were in Lola's prison.

I go to another place in Germany: a great medieval hall, with banners on the stone walls. It's a reunion of a thousand people from Gleiwitz. They're drinking beer. They're eating sausages and sauerkraut. They're laughing and singing, "Ein prosit, ein prosit ..." And I'm like a little flower girl. You know, the girl who goes from table to table selling roses? I'm going around asking, "Uh, excuse me. Anyone here who was in prison in Gleiwitz?" Yeah, I am a party pooper. I admit it. But eventually I find five of Lola's prisoners.

I take the train to Gleiwitz. Now it's Gliwice, Poland. And going through Communist East Berlin, I'm arrested, taken off the train, and locked up in a little room because with me I have a copy of the book *Die Vertreibung der deutschen Bevölkerung aus den Gebieten östlich der Oder-Neisse* ["The Expulsion of the German Population from the Territories East of the Oder-Neisse," published in the 1950s by the Bonn government]. Hours later I'm let out and I get to Gleiwitz/ Gliwice at four in the morning. It's a city of two hundred thousand people, almost none of whom speak English. I don't speak Polish, but I find three of Lola's guards. They remember her well.

It's 1989, Poland is still Communist, but I get into Lola's prison, into the prisoners' cells. I tell them, "Djien dobre. Good morning." I see the prison records. Remember when, according to Lola, she went to the Polish government and said, "I want revenge"? Well, I find her application, in her own handwriting. She wrote, "I want to cooperate against our German oppressors." I find the official document appointing her commandant in Gleiwitz.

After that, I go to Germany *eleven* more times, to Poland three more times, to France, Austria, Israel, Canada, and all around the United States. Through interpreters I talk to two hundred people in Polish and Russian, Danish and Swedish, German and Dutch, French and Spanish, Yiddish and Hebrew. I left out English. I get three hundred hours of tape-recorded interviews, and I see thousands of documents.

And what do I learn? Well: Lola was telling the truth. She *was* the commandant in Gleiwitz. And she *was* taking revenge. She slapped the Germans around. And just as she said, she stopped. I remember one day in 1989, I'm having lunch with one of her guards at the Hotel Leszny. We're eating wienerschnitzel. And out of the blue the man says, "You know, Lola stopped. She told us, 'Stop!' She said, 'We're going to show the Germans we're not like them.'"

The Facts Come Out

So Lola was telling the truth. But, she wasn't telling the whole truth. Lola had told me the people in her prison were German soldiers. And yes, twenty of them *were* German soldiers, men who worked as painters, carpenters, and such. But there were a thousand other prisoners there, and they were German civilians: German men, German women, German children.

One prisoner was a fourteen-year-old boy. He had been out in Gleiwitz wearing his boy scout pants. A man cried out, "You're wearing black pants! You're a fascist!," and he chased the boy and tackled him at the Church of Saint Peter and Paul, and then took him to Lola's prison. Now, the boy was completely innocent. So were *most* of the people in Lola's prison. They weren't Gestapo. They weren't SS. They weren't even Nazis. Out of a thousand prisoners, just twenty were ever even *accused* of it.

But the Germans in Lola's prison were slapped and whipped. And I'm so sorry to have to say it, but they were also tortured. The boy scout: the guards poured gasoline on his curly black hair and set it on fire. The boy went insane. The men: they were beaten with a *Totschläger*, a "beater-to-death." It's a long steel spring with a big lead ball at the end. You use it like a racketball racket. Your arm, your wrist, the spring: they deliver a triple hit to a German's face.

Lola didn't tell me, but the Germans in her prison were dying. I found their death certificates in Gleiwitz city hall. One of Lola's guards told me, "Yeah, the Germans would die." He told me, "I'd put the bodies in a horse-drawn cart. I'd cover them with potato peels so no one would see. I'd ride to the outskirts and, after I threw the potato peels out, I'd take the Germans to the Catholic cemetery. To the mass grave."

We all know about Auschwitz. But I have to tell you, the Germans in Lola's prison were worse off than Lola had been at Auschwitz. Lola at Auschwitz wasn't locked in a room night and day. She wasn't tortured night after night. She herself told me: "Thank God, nobody tried to rape us. The Germans weren't allowed to." But all of

that happened to German girls at Lola's prison in Gleiwitz.

One woman I talked with wasn't even German. She was Polish. In 1945 she was twenty years old: a tall, blonde, beautiful medical student. The guards at Lola's prison pulled off her clothes and told her, "Let's do it!" They beat her and beat her, night after night, until she was black and blue. One morning, she came back to her cell and fell on the floor, sobbing. Her cellmate asked her, "What, what is that blue thing you're wearing? Oh, oh, it's your skin."

And ten feet away was Lola's office. Lola in her brass, braid, and stars. I once asked her, "Lola, where did you get that uniform?," and Lola said, "Well, the Russians must've given it to me." That wasn't the whole truth either.

Lola was in the Polish secret police. Its name was the Office of State Security, in Polish the Urzad Bezpieczenstwa Publicznego. The Germans called it the Polish Gestapo. One of its missions was to round up Nazi suspects. But for all practical purposes, if you were a German, you were a Nazi suspect. So the mission was to round up Germans, imprison them, interrogate them, and if they confess, prosecute them.

In the Office of State Security, the lower ranks were Polish Catholics, but most of the leaders were Polish Jews. The chief of the Office in Warsaw was a Jew. (When I was in Poland he wasn't alive, but I met some of his family.) The department directors, all or almost all of them, were Jews.

In Silesia, the province where Lola was commandant, the director of the Office of State Security was a Jew. I met him in Copenhagen, a little bald-headed man. The director of prisons was also a Jew. I met his whole family in Tel Aviv. The secretary of state security was a Jew. I met him time and again at his home in New Jersey. And in the Office of State Security in Silesia in February 1945, of the officers — not the enlisted men, not the guards, but the lieutenants, captains and such — one-fourth were Catholics, and three-fourths were Jews.

Solomon Morel

I interviewed twenty-four of them. And I learned that the Office of State Security ran 227 prisons for German civilians like Lola's. It also ran 1,255 concentration camps, and I interviewed four of the commandants. They were also Jews. One was Lola's boy friend, a man who'd lost in the Holocaust his mother, his father, all his brothers (he had no sisters), all his uncles and aunts, and all but one of his cousins. I hope that, like me, you can all have compassion for Solomon Morel.

But one night in February, 1945, Solomon went to *his* concentration camp in the city of Swietochlowice. He went into the Germans' barracks, and said, "My name is Captain Morel. I am a Jew. I was at Auschwitz. I swore I would take revenge on you Nazis." They weren't Nazis, but Solomon said, "Now! Everyone! Sing the Horst Wessel song!" That was a Nazi anthem. No one wanted to sing it. One boy, fourteen years old, didn't even know it.

Solomon had a club. He said, "Sing it!" Some people began, "Die Fahne hoch! Die Reihen fest geschlossen ..." "Sing it! Sing it, I say!" They started singing, "Clear the streets for the brown battalions. Clear the street for the Storm Section men." Solomon had all this hate inside him, and he released it. He picked up a wooden stool and he started beating the Germans to death. For this one camp, I found the death certificates for 1,583 Germans.

Death Toll

In other camps and other prisons, thousands of German civilians died. German men, women, children, *babies*. At one camp there was a barracks for fifty babies. They were in cribs, but the camp doctor, Dr. Cedrowski — he was a Jew who had been in Auschwitz — he didn't heat the barracks, and he didn't give the babies milk. He gave them only some soup, and forty-eight of the fifty babies died.

All in all, sixty to eighty thousand Germans died. Some were killed by Jews, some by Catholics, and many by typhus, dysentery, and starvation, but sixty to eighty thousand died in the custody of the Office of State Security. Now, someone, a German, once told me that this was another holocaust. Well, I'm sure it seemed like a holocaust to the Germans.

But let's not forget: sixty thousand is one percent of the number of Jews who died in the capital-H Holocaust. Jews didn't do what the Germans did. We didn't plot to exterminate the German people. We didn't mobilize all the Jews and the Jewish state. (There *was* no Jewish state.) We didn't send the Germans systematically to cyanide chambers.

But let's also remember that sixty to eighty thousand civilians is more than the Germans lost at Dresden, and more than, or just as many as, the Japanese lost at Hiroshima, the Americans at Pearl Harbor, the British in the Battle of Britain, or the Jews at Belsen or Buchenwald.

Cover-up

All this was covered up for nearly fifty years. Jews who were involved didn't talk about it. For example, the chief of police in occupied Breslau, Germany, in 1945, who was Jewish, later wrote a book about the Holocaust. And in telling about his time as chief of police in Breslau, all he says is, "We moved westward to Breslau and ... from there ... to Prague." That's it. And Jewish reporters who knew didn't write about it. There's a working reporter right now in New York City who was in Poland right after World War II. He told me, "Whatever, *whatever* the Germans tell you, believe me, it's true." But he himself, he never wrote about it.

The truth was covered up, and was still being covered up. In 1989, I went to Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, Israel's central Holocaust center. As you may know, they have fifty million documents there about the Holocaust. I ask them, "Well, what do you have on the Office of State Security?" They have nothing. I ask them, "What do you have on the Jews in the Office of State Security?" Nothing. I say, "Well, there were Jewish commandants, Jewish directors, Jewish ..." The chairman of Yad Vashem responds, "It sounds rather imaginary," and the director of archives says to me, "Imm-possible! Impossible!"

Denial, denial. I know that denial is a very human thing. But historically I don't think it's a Jewish thing. When Abraham, Isaac and Jacob committed sins, we Jews didn't deny it. Yes, Abraham, the father of our people, sinned. God told him to go to Israel, instead he went to Egypt, and we admitted it in the Book of Genesis. Judah (the word "Jew" comes from Judah) made love to a prostitute. We admitted it in Genesis. Moses, even Moses sinned, and God didn't let him into the Promised Land. We admitted that in Deuteronomy. Solomon — good, wise, old King Solomon — did evil. He "worshipped idols." We didn't cover it up. We admitted it in the Book of Kings.

It seems to me that that's the Jewish tradition. How can we say to other people — to Germans, to Serbs, to Hutus — "What you're doing is wrong," if we ourselves do it and cover it up? I wish it were someone else who was here today. Abraham Foxman. Elie Wiesel. I wish he or she would simply say yes, some Jews, *some* Jews, did evil in 1945. But when the Jewish establishment didn't say it, then I had to say it.

I'm a reporter. That's what reporters do. Someone kills sixty thousand people, we report it. If we don't report it, it might become common, or more common, than it already is. But also I'm a Jew, and the Torah says (Leviticus 5:1), that if someone does evil, and if I know it and *don't* report it, then I am guilty too.

So I start writing this book. The title now won't be *Lola*. It'll be *An Eye for an Eye*. And on the third page I write, "I hope that *An Eye for an Eye* is something more than the story of Jewish revenge: that it's the story of Jewish redemption." I write about Jews taking revenge, yes. But that is one tenth of *An Eye for an Eye*. Mostly I write ...

I write about Zlata, Moshe, Mania, and Pola. They were Jews who refused to look at, much less *work* at Lola's prison. I write about Ada, who visited the prison once, just once, and then fled to Israel. I write about Shlomo, who was in the Office of State Security and, at the risk of his life, told people in it, "You must stop doing this."

I write about Lola. I write that in Gleiwitz she finally remembered how a Jew should act and, at the risk of her life, she got bread, her own bread from her own home, and smuggled it to the German prisoners. Now this isn't something that Lola told me. No, the prison guards told me. They said that if Lola had been caught, she'd have gone to prison herself.

And I write that at Yom Kippur, 1945, Lola — again at the risk of her life — escaped from Gleiwitz, just as she had escaped some months earlier from Auschwitz, and came to the United States. Almost all the Jews in the Office of State Security escaped, at the risk of their lives, in September, October, and November 1945. And I write that too. They crept through the woods into Germany, or climbed the pass into Italy. They did what the SS never did: they deserted, they *defected*.

Rejection

I was crying while I was writing this. My advance from Henry Holt was $25,000, and for three years I was writing *An Eye for an Eye*. In September 1991 I finally finished it, wrapped it up, and mailed it to Henry Holt in New York. And I told myself: "Okay. I've done it. That's the end of the cover-up."

No. Because then the people at Henry Holt say, "We don't want it." They don't say it's wrong. They know it's right. They just say, "We don't want to publish it. Keep the twenty-five thousand." Okay. My agent and I send the manuscript to other publishers: to Harper's, to Scribner's — you name it, we sent it — to two dozen other publishers.

And let me tell you. The letters we get from these people, they're practically *blurbs*. The publishers say: "well-written," "extremely well-written," "chilling,"

"compelling," "disturbing," "dismaying," "shocking," "startling," "astonishing," "mesmerizing," "extraordinary," "I was riveted," "I was bowled over," "I love it!" And the publishers all reject it. The letter from St. Martin's Press says, "I am always moved by Holocaust books, but I'd have trouble distinguishing *this* book ... from *other* books ... in this vast area of literature."

Okay. My agent and I agree that if we can't sell a book, we'll try magazines. One of the chapters is on Solomon Morel. Remember? The man who lost his mother, father, all his siblings, uncles, and aunts in the Holocaust. The man who had so much hate for the Germans, he had to disgorge it, who commanded a concentration camp at Swietochlowice, and beat Germans to death.

Solomon is still alive. He's wanted by Interpol for crimes against humanity. Interpol has an international warrant out for his arrest. But he's fled to Israel. He's taking refuge in Tel Aviv, and no one in America — no newspaper, magazine or television network — has ever reported it.

So we send the chapter on Solomon Morel to *Esquire* magazine. I've been a contributing editor there, a war correspondent in Vietnam, Iraq, Bosnia. *Esquire* says, "No." We send it to *GQ* magazine. *GQ* says, "Yes!" The editor says it's the most important story in *GQ*'s history. He even tells that to an editor of *Esquire* at a bar in Greenwich Village. He tells him, "Ha, ha! You don't have it! We do!"

For six weeks *GQ* is fact-checking. They don't find a single error. They send me the galley proofs, the page proofs, and on Wednesday the presses will roll. And then the telephone rings at my home in the Rocky Mountains. The editor of *GQ* says, "John, this isn't a happy phone call. We aren't going to run it." He tells me to keep the $15,000 and to sell the story somewhere else.

So once again my agent and I are making calls, sending faxes, passing out the *GQ* page proofs. *Harper's* magazine says no. *Rolling Stone* says no and "I'm sure you'll understand." *Mother Jones*, that great exposé magazine ("Extra! Extra! Cigarettes are bad for you!") doesn't even call back. *The New Yorker* (which has published ten pieces by me) refuses even to look at it.

The Attacks Begin

But finally, *finally*, in March 1993, the story of Solomon Morel is published in the *Village Voice*. And in November, *An Eye for an Eye* is published by Basic Books, a division of HarperCollins. So, thank God, now it's all over. I can relax now. *Not.*

Because one day later there's a telephone call to Basic Books. It's from the executive director of the World Jewish Congress. He says he wants an immediate retraction, and if he doesn't get it he'll call a major press conference *tomorrow*. He says he'll denounce me, Basic Books, and HarperCollins, and say, "They are *all* anti-Semites." Well, we don't retract, and the World Jewish Congress doesn't denounce. But ...

Then the *reviews* come out. And the reviewers say that *An Eye for an Eye* isn't *true*, that what I wrote there never happened at all.

Please! Much of *An Eye for an Eye* had been fact-checked by *California* magazine, fact-checked by *GQ*, and, for the *Village Voice*, fact-checked by a woman who is the Fact-Checker from Hell. She and I checked every single word, even if we had to call up Poland. And when, after two weeks of this, night and day, we were finally done, the editor of the *Voice* gave an interview saying, "This may be the most accurate story in the history of American journalism."

Much of *An Eye for an Eye* was corroborated by *60 Minutes*, which found eight eyewitnesses I hadn't found. It was corroborated by the *New York Times* and the *International Herald Tribune*. Historians hired by major newspapers in Germany went to the German Federal Archives and wrote, "The facts are true," "The facts are right," "The facts are iron-bound."

But in the United States, one review was entitled "False Witness." Another was headed "The Big Lie, Continued."

The Jewish paper *Forward* said, "Sack is transparently writing docudrama," and told readers that Lola Potok was *not* the commandant of the prison in Gleiwitz. Well, Lola herself had told me, "I was the commandant," and thirty-five other people, including the current commandant, including the current director of prisons, said yes, Lola was the commandant. I have the document that says, "We appoint Citizen Lola Potok Commandant," and I have a document signed by Lola Potok, Commandant. But still the *Forward* said, "The unlikelihood is *overwhelming* but Sack ... seems ... oblivious." As I read this, I felt I was being lectured by Chico Marx. Remember? "Who you gonna believe? Your own two eyes or me?" I wrote a letter to the *Forward*. Over the last seven years, I've had to write, at last count, about 1,500 letters about *An Eye for an Eye*. And all those letters, added up, are twice as long as the book is.

Maybe you're wondering. What sort of a crazy man am I? Why don't I just say the hell with it? Why do I

carry on?

I'll tell you. There are eighty-five thousand books about the Holocaust. And none of them, if you ask me, has an honest answer to the question, "How could the Germans do it?" How could the *Germans* — the people who gave us Beethoven, the Ninth Symphony, the Ode to Joy, "Alle Menschen werden Brüder, All men will be brothers" — perpetrate the Holocaust?

This mystery, we've got to solve it. We've got to, or we'll keep on having genocides in Cambodia, Bosnia, Zaire. Well, what I report in *An Eye for an Eye* is that Lola has solved it. The Jews from the Office of State Security have solved it. Because in their agony, their despair, their insanity, if you will, they felt they became like the Germans — the Nazis — themselves.

Wages of Hatred

And if I had been there, I'd have become one too, and now I understand why. Lola, like a lot of Jews, understandably, were full of *hate* in 1945. They were volcanoes of red-hot hate. They thought if they joined the Office of State Security, and spit out their hate at the Germans, then they'd be rid of it.

No. It doesn't work that way. Let's say I'm in *love* with someone. I don't tell myself, "Uh, oh. I've got inside of me one, two pounds of love, so if I love her and *love* her, then I'll use all of my love up, and I'll be all out of love." No. We all understand that love is a paradoxical thing, that the more we send out, the more we've got.

So *why* don't we understand that about hate? If we hate, and if we act on that hate, then we hate even more later on. If we spit out a drop of hate, what happens? Well, we stimulate the saliva glands, and we produce a drop and a quarter of it. If we spit that out, we produce a drop and a half, then two drops, three, a teaspoon, tablespoon, a Mount Saint Helens. The more we send out, the more we've got, until we are perpetual-motion machines, sending out hate and hate until we've created a holocaust.

You don't have to be a German to become like that. You can be a Serb, a Hutu, a Jew. You can be an American. *We* were the ones in the Philippines. *We* were the ones in Vietnam. *We* were the ones in Washington, DC, for ten thousand years the home of the Anacostia Indians. They had one of their camp grounds at what now is the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

We *all* have it in us to become like Nazis. Hate, as Lola discovered, hate is a muscle, and if we want to be monsters all we have to do is exercise it. To hate the Germans, to hate the Arabs, to hate the Jews. Hate. The more we exercise it, the bigger it gets, just as if every day we curl forty pounds, far from being worn out, in time we are curling fifty, sixty pounds. We become the Mr. Universe of Hate. We all can be hate-full people, *hateful* people. We can destroy the people we hate, *maybe*, but we surely destroy ourselves.

That's what the Jews in the Office of State Security have taught us. That's what I tried to write, what I did write, in *An Eye for an Eye*. The very first words are the dedication. I'd like to read them: "For all who died and for all who because of this story might live."

That's what I'd planned to say at the Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Questions from the Audience

Question: I'm very much moved by your presentation. I wish to commend you for your courage. Did you mention that Solomon Morel was also the commander at Jaworzno? At Jaworzno, there were young people, young boys — fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen — Poles, Germans, and Lithuanians — and other ethnics were tortured and murdered there. There is now a group of Jaworzno, and also Swietochlowice, survivors (as they use the term), who are getting together, Poles, Germans, Lithuanians, whoever.

John Sack: Morel was at Jaworzno afterwards. Jaworzno was a camp for Poles. By that time they were putting Poles in the camp, rather than —

Q: There were Germans there also.

JS: There were? Thank you.

Q: What would you recommend on the hate train that we're on here in the United States and the hate laws that are being promulgated?

JS: Well, I don't think that we're on a hate train. I'm writing an article for *Esquire* magazine about the revisionists and in the three conferences that I've been to, and certainly at this conference, I have not seen hate manifested. I don't see people who feel hate. Even people who are called neo-Nazis, like Ernst Zündel, who is not a hate-filled man.

Q: No, I mean in the United States, we're seeing hate laws, thought police, politically correct speech, people are winding up ... as many have here, for that matter ...

JS: Well, of course I'm for free speech, and even if what Fred Töben said was hateful — and it wasn't — and even if what Germar was saying was hateful — and it certainly wasn't — and what Ernst was saying and what Faurisson was saying was hateful — and none of it was — even if it was, it should be allowed, of course, and I'm glad it's allowed in the United States.

Q: What has Lola's reaction been to the book?

JS: Lola actually called me right before the book came out. We had a nice talk. We chatted. I sent her the book. It took her about half a year to read. Her only comment on it was that I had made a mistake, that she was first in Germany and then she came to Paris and there she met her husband and she went back to Germany and got married, and I had it the other way around. That was her only comment. She's now living in Australia and I understand she has Alzheimer's disease.

Q: Would I be correct in assuming that these people should be brought to justice, given a fair trial, and hanged? After all, we're still prosecuting seventy-five-year-old German corporals.

JS: Well, I wish we wouldn't. I think it's too late for anybody to be brought to justice. But I think there should be a trial of Solomon Morel, if for no other reason than to bring out the facts. I would hate to see him go to jail, and as a matter of fact most of his prisoners at Swietochlowice, his former prisoners do not want to see him go to jail, but they want the facts to come out. They would like him just to apologize.

Q: Both the German government and the Polish government are wishy-washy on this. They aren't really seeking to have Solomon Morel extradited from Israel.

JS: That's true. The German government had a prosecution of him going and that just fell by the wayside, disappeared, and the Polish government was very strange. They could have accused him of murder. There were witnesses that saw him commit murder. They just accused him of brutality and other things that expired under the statute of limitations in 1965.

Q: Not only that, but Solomon Morel, living in Israel, is collecting a pension from the Polish government and the "Polish" government is not Polish. The Polish government is a Communist government, and most of them, not all, are Jewish — they call themselves "former Communists." So, the "Polish" government is not Polish, and we heard about what's happening in Germany a little while ago. So, what chance is there of catching this monster and exposing him to the world?

[Voice] Kidnap him like the Israelis did Eichmann.

JS: I suppose that would be one answer. As I understand it Solomon Morel cannot collect his pension unless he's in Poland — that's why he wanted to stay there — I don't know whether that may have changed.

Q: Has Solomon Morel said anything?

JS: Solomon Morel, people keep going up to his door every couple of weeks. Once they camped in front of his door for a couple of days, and his daughter comes to the door and says that he doesn't want to give interviews and says that he's writing a book about all of this. That's just what they say. I don't know if it's true.

Q: You say that you believe in the gas chambers. Have you gotten far enough into it that you could produce any evidence that you could present here tonight?

JS: Do I have any evidence here tonight about the existence of gas chambers? No. I accept that people of good faith, honest people, can really look at the evidence and feel that there's not enough evidence that there were gas chambers. I hope that you accept that other people can look at the evidence and conclude that there *is* enough evidence, and that's my conclusion. I don't think that anybody who disagrees is a "neo-Nazi" or an "anti-Semite" or a hate-filled person. I think that you just happen to have a different opinion from me.

Q: Can you talk about your own experience being discriminated against and called an "anti-Semite," and yet you're a Jew. These reviews and articles were obviously libelling you.

JS: On the Charlie Rose show I was called an "anti-Semite" and a "neo-Nazi" by Deborah Lipstadt. [laughter and applause] I called her up after that and reminded her that I'd read her book, and I sent her a nice note about it and told her what I was trying to do in my book, and I said "How could you have said that about me?" She said "You are worse than a 'Holocaust denier,'" and I said "Deborah, I'm worse than a 'Holocaust denier'?" and she said "You are worse than a 'Holocaust denier.'" I said "Could you explain why?," and she said "No. I have a faculty meeting," [laughter] and that's the last I talked to her. It doesn't scare me. It doesn't hurt me. It amuses me.

Q: Are there any Jewish organizations, major Jewish organizations which would permit our principal speakers to speak in front of them?

JS: Not only that, are there any major Jewish organizations that would permit *me* to speak in front of them? [laughter and applause] So far, none, and believe me I've asked. I asked Hillel at UCLA. I certainly asked the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and no, so far, none.

Q: You refer to Nazis as a model for hate. As a German-American I consider the model for hate to be the Jewish Bolshevik regime that killed anywhere from thirty to sixty-six million people. I've just become aware of that by reading Solzhenitsyn's three books and I'm wondering if you have read these books?

JS: I haven't, but you know, when you talk about the Jewish Bolshevik regime be aware that just because, if most of the Bolsheviks, I don't know, were Jews, please be aware that most of the Jews weren't Bolsheviks, and never were.

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Charles Provan

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Blacklisting My Book, 'An Eye for An Eye'

John Sack

This prolific author and journalist tells the story of his headline-making book in an address he was prevented from giving at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum. Sack dramatically tells how Polish Jews working in the Communist Office of State Security tortured and murdered innocent German civilians, how he discovered some of these Jews years later, and how a few of them repented of their crimes. Following his lecture, Holocaust true-believer Sack answers tough questions from conference attendees. 58 min. (#v134) $19.95

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My Political Imprisonment in Germany

Fredrick Toben

The chief of Australia's Adelaide Institute discloses the facts of his 1999 arrest in Mannheim, and discusses his seven-months imprisonment for thought crime there. Dr. Toben, a philosopher by university training, delivers a moving but clear-eyed account of how his intense thirst for knowledge through free inquiry led him to a German jail, and continues to lead him, undaunted, in the search for truth. 62 min. (#v125) $19.95

The Fate of Unregistered Auschwitz Inmates

Jürgen Graf

Swiss author and researcher Graf examines long-unavailable Auschwitz camp records, from the Moscow archives and elsewhere, to establish the true fates of thousands of Jews at Auschwitz deemed gassed by exterminationists. Graf cites documents showing treatment and release from the Auschwitz hospital of numerous unregistered Hungarian Jews; the presence in Auschwitz of a sizable number of Jewish children, a good number of whom survived the war; and records of many Hungarian Jews, unregistered at Auschwitz, who were sent on to other German camps. Bristling with facts and insight. 55 min. (#v126) $19.95

My Struggle in Canada

Ernst Zündel

The man who commissioned the Leuchter Report and inspired David Irving's conversion to gas-chamber skepticism talks movingly of his marathon struggle for freedom of expression in his adopted homeland. Zündel relates how the ludicrously named Canadian Human Rights Tribunal has been citing Zündel materials on an Internet website, though owned and operated by Ingrid Rimland in California, as the latest pretext for muzzling him. As Ernst makes clear, the machinations of Canada's spy and police agencies, its media, and its Jewish organizational mafia have anything but dampened the spirits of this one-man truth wave. 66 min. (#v127) $19.95

A Skeptical Look at 'Schindler's List'

Theodore J. O'Keefe

IHR editor O'Keefe takes a skeptical look at "Schindler's List," to show that — as Schindler's Jewish "survivors" agree — the list was actually the work of the venal Jewish ghetto policeman and concentration camp capo, Marcel Goldberg. Looking beyond the misnamed list, O'Keefe establishes that Schindler's life-saving exertions are a postwar invention; that his activities as an industrialist and employer of "slave labor" were fully in line with official German policy; and that the survival of "his" Jews, at a branch of the concentration camp Gross-Rosen in Moravia at war's end was far from unique. 58 min. (#v128) $19.95

On the Front Lines

Robert Countess, Bradley Smith, & John Bennett

Three revisionist activists in top form! Retired college professor and minister of the Gospel Bob Countess recounts, with gusto, his revisionist adventures as a journalist and prankster in Scandinavia and his promotional and publishing work with such scholars as Germar Rudolf. Bradley Smith tells of his latest successes on US campuses, where his publications have graduated from being banned to being burned. Longtime Australian activist and civil-liberties attorney John Bennett champions a more diverse, better humored revisionism. 105 min. (#v129) $19.95

Machinations of the Anti-Defamation League

Pete McCloskey

The former US Congressman tells how his long career in law, politics, academic life, and the Marine Corps led him to mistrust governmental official history and to esteem the mission of the IHR. McCloskey relates what he has learned in his role

New Light on Dr. Miklos Nyiszli and His Auschwitz Book

CHARLES D. PROVAN

IN 1951, PORTIONS OF A MEMOIR attributed to a former inmate of Auschwitz, Dr. Miklos Nyiszli, appeared in France. Nyiszli's account caught the eye of another former prisoner of the Germans during the Second World War, Professor Paul Rassinier. He was struck by the exaggerations and absurdities of Nyiszli's story, which allowed the reader to conclude that the Nazis had gassed twenty-nine million people at Auschwitz over four and a half years, and that the gas chamber at Birkenau had been one meter wide. He also made careful note of the discrepancies between subsequent editions in French, German, and English. It was Rassinier who fired the first shots over the historicity of the book. He wrote in 1961: "The versions that have been made public are divergent and contradict one another from one page to the next. The author speaks of places he obviously never visited, etc...." In 1964, Rassinier broadened his critique to the existential, declaring that "[E]ither Dr. Miklos Nyiszli never existed, or if he did exist he never set foot in the places he describes."

Subsequent revisionist writers have had much to say about this unusual book. Wilhelm Stäglich called it "in part, simply absurd." Professor Robert Faurisson has endorsed Rassinier's characterization of Nyiszli's book as a "rascally trick." Dr. William Lindsey called Nyiszli "legendary." Mark Weber called Nyiszli's claims "fantastic." Ditlieb Felderer wondered: "Seeing so little is correct about Nyiszli and about that which he writes – what then is the real truth about Nyiszli?" Arthur Butz refers to "the writings attributed to one Miklos Nyiszli, which we should not accept on anything, least of all a number."

My Involvement

When I read Henri Roques's excellent *"Confessions" of Kurt Gerstein* about ten years ago, I was already a believer in the revisionist method. After conducting various experiments on gas chamber capacity and diesel emissions, I became convinced that millions of Jews had indeed been gassed during the war, chiefly at the Operation Reinhard camps. This made me simultaneously a revisionist and an exterminationist, or, as Ernst Zündel put it several years ago, a revisionist who believes in the gas chambers. Intrigued by the numerous criticisms of Dr. Nyiszli in the revisionist literature, I decided to undertake a study of his book to determine if it could be substantiated. I got more than I bargained for.

Charles Provan is a printer by trade and a lay theologian by avocation. Ernst Zündel has called him "a revisionist who believes in the gas chambers." Provan is the author of *Some Holes, Some Holocaust,* an analysis of the ruins of the roof of an alleged gas chamber at Auschwitz-Birkenau. This essay is an expanded version of the author's lecture to IHR's 13th conference (May 2000).

In Search of the Historical Nyiszli

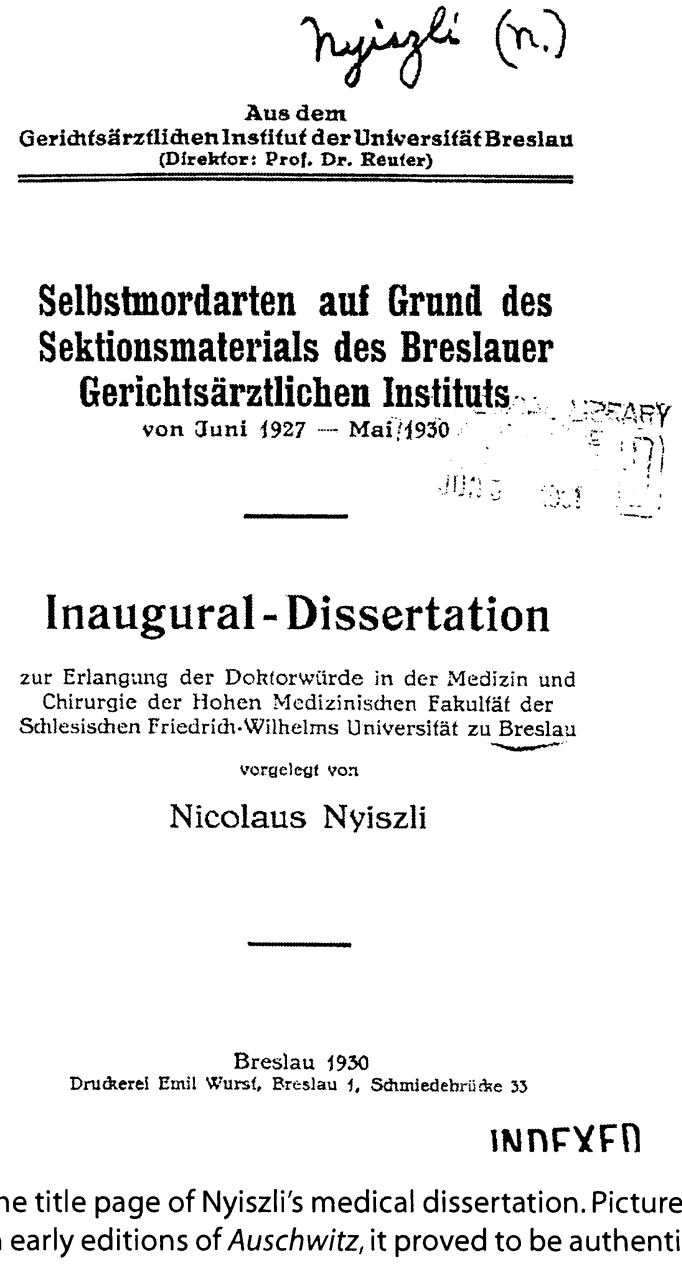
The most radical of the revisionist questions struck me as very important: Did Dr. Nyiszli even exist? As I pondered how to answer it, I recalled seeing, in an early edition of *Auschwitz*, a small photo of the title page of Miklos's Nyiszli doctoral dissertation, *Selbstmordarten auf Grund des Sektionsmaterials des Breslauer Gerichtsarztlichen Instituts von Juni 1927–Mai 1930* [Types of Suicide, Based on the Autopsy Material of the Breslau Forensic Medicine Institute from June 1927–May 1930]. This dissertation was written for the Medical Faculty of the Silesian Friedrich Wilhelm University in Breslau, and its author given as "Nicolaus Nyiszli" ("Miklos" being the Hungarian version of "Nicolaus," or Nicholas). Nyiszli refers several times in *Auschwitz* to having attended medical school in Germany. He writes, "I had spent ten years in this country, first as a student, later as a doctor ..." (p. 23) and "Suddenly I recalled another scene; fifteen years before, the Rector of the Medical School of Frederick Wilhelm University in Breslau shook my hand and wished me a brilliant future as he handed me my diploma, 'with the congratulations of the jury'" (p. 27). (All citations from the English-language version of *Auschwitz* in this article are taken from the 1997 edition, published by Arcade [New York], and distributed by Little, Brown.) Nyiszli's recollections seemed to jibe with his purported dissertation, so I decided to search for a copy. My earlier research had acquainted me with the *National Union Catalog, Pre-1956 Imprints*, which enumerates libraries which hold the listed books. I checked the catalog, and there it was: a single copy of Nyiszli's dissertation, at Yale's Whitney Medical Library. I requested an inter-library loan, and waited, and waited some more. A second request earned me only more waiting. Finally, I called the library myself.

This frustrated, and frustrating, phone call unlocked the Nyiszli case for me. After being transferred from extension to extension, I finally spoke with a librarian who told me that Yale definitely had the publication: he had seen it. But, he told me, the section of the library where it was shelved was being rearranged, and the books were still out of order, making the Nyiszli dissertation unavailable. In my disappointment, I informed the librarian that I had hoped to examine the document to establish that Dr. Miklos Nyiszli had actually existed. At this the librarian exclaimed, "Of course he existed! Two of my friends knew him personally, and I remember reading his account of Auschwitz in a Budapest newspaper when I lived in Budapest shortly after the war." I was floored: even though Yale couldn't locate its copy of Dr. Nyiszli's doctoral dissertation, all of a sudden I had several new lines of attack.

The librarian went on to suggest that perhaps a copy of the dissertation had been received by the National Library of Medicine in Bethesda, Maryland. I called them, and he was right: there was a copy of *Selbstmordarten* in their History of Medicine Division. I obtained a photocopy, and had it translated.

Nyiszli's 1930 Medical Dissertation

Nyiszli's dissertation is a study and statistical analysis of suicide victims in the Breslau area over a three year period. Published in 1930, it classifies and analyzes each autopsied victim according to sex, method of suicide, and medical conditions and personal circumstances which might have inclined the victim to take his or her own life.



Nyiszli (n.)

Aus dem
Gerichtsärztlichen Institut der Universität Breslau
(Direktor: Prof. Dr. Reuter)

Selbstmordarten auf Grund des Sektionsmaterials des Breslauer Gerichtsärztlichen Instituts
von Juni 1927 — Mai 1930

LIBRARY
JUN 5 1931

Inaugural-Dissertation

zur Erlangung der Doktorwürde in der Medizin und Chirurgie der Hohen Medizinischen Fakultät der Schlesischen Friedrich-Wilhelms Universität zu Breslau

vorgelegt von

Nicolaus Nyiszli

Breslau 1930
Druckerei Emil Wurst, Breslau 1, Schmiedebrücke 33

INDEXED

The title page of Nyiszli's medical dissertation. Pictured in early editions of *Auschwitz*, it proved to be authentic.

The dissertation contains references which connect with those in *Auschwitz*. Nyiszli writes, "In conclusion, I should like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Professor Dr. Reuter and Professor Dr. Strassmann for the support and stimulation they provided for my work." A Dr. Strasseman [*sic*] is mentioned in *Auschwitz*: "No one present knew that I had spent three years at the Boroslo [*sic*] Institute of Forensic Medicine, where I had had a chance to study every possible form of suicide under the supervision of Professor Strasseman" (p. 35).

The final page of the dissertation supplies some biographical particulars about the author:

> I, Nicolaus Nyiszli, was born on June 17, 1901 in Simleul-Silvaniei (Transylvania). I attended elementary school for four years and the Humanistic Roman Catholic Episcopal Higher Gymnasium in Simleul-Silvaniei (Transylvania). In autumn 1920 I passed the Abitur [final examination].
>
> First I studied medicine for two semesters in Klausenburg (Romania); then for three semesters in Kiel; from 1925 to 1927 I did not continue my studies because of the bad economic situation. In the summer semester of 1927 I was able to resume my studies and studied medicine in Breslau. At the end of the summer semester of 1927 I passed the preliminary examination for the medical degree, and in the middle of April 1930 I passed the state medical examination, both examinations at the Silesian Friedrich Wilhelm University in Breslau. I am a Romanian citizen.

Two Postwar Acquaintances of Dr. Nyiszli

With the help of the librarian at Yale, I was able to contact the two men who had known Dr. Nyiszli after the war. One of them had been a friend of Dr. Nyiszli, and recalled once visiting Nyiszli and finding him at work on his Auschwitz book. This surprised me, because at that time I was proceeding under the hypothesis that Nyiszli's book had in fact been written by someone else.

This, I thought, might explain such gross errors the "four elevators" at Birkenau crematorium 1. According to *Auschwitz*:

> ... they dragged the slippery bodies to the elevators in the next room. Four good-sized elevators were functioning. They loaded twenty to twenty-five corpses to an elevator. The ring of a bell was the signal that the load was ready to ascend. The elevator stopped at the crematorium's incineration room ...(p. 53).

As most readers doubtless know, the crematorium Nyiszli is describing has only one elevator, as is apparent from the blueprints and the present-day ruins, which I have visited myself. Taking my cue from errors in several manuscripts of the Old Testament transcribed from dictation, I supposed that the most reasonable explanation for Nyiszli's writing "four large elevators," when there was only one, was as follows. In Hungarian, I had learned, Nyiszli's text has "Négy nagy teherfelvonogep." "Négy" means "four." "Nagy" means "large." Now, if Nyiszli had actually lived in crematorium 1 at Birkenau, as he claims, he would have to have known that there was only one elevator. To explain the mistake in *Auschwitz*, I supposed that as Nyiszli spoke of a "large, large" elevator, his transcriber wrote the similar sounding (in Hungarian), but mistaken, "four large" elevators" (Hungarian: "Nagy nagy teherfelvonogep").

Now, however, a personal friend of Nyiszli's had told me he had seen Nyiszli writing his Auschwitz book. Nyiszli himself, then, had to have been responsible for its errors. Could the integrity of Nyiszli's *Auschwitz* still be upheld?

My interviews of the two acquaintances of Dr. Nyiszli, both of whom were Jewish, gained me interesting information about Nyiszli's relations with the Jewish community after the war. His personal friend told me that everyone took notice when Nyiszli's daughter (who, like his wife, had survived Auschwitz) married a gentile after the war. The other acquaintance confirmed this, though the two disagreed on the nationality of Nyiszli's gentile son-in-law. One said he was a Russian officer; the other, a Romanian officer.

The man who was merely acquainted with Nyiszli informed me that he had met him at a state hospital, where Dr. Nyiszli was on the staff. Dr. Nyiszli had given him an injection for an illness. This man disagreed with Nyiszli's friend on an important issue. He told me that many people, Jews and others, disapproved of Nyiszli's relations with the Nazis at Auschwitz, and viewed Nyiszli in a very negative light; my informant concurred.

Dr. Nyiszli's Visit to America in 1939

On page 61 of my marked-up edition of *Auschwitz*, I had noticed this intriguing annotation:

> Dr. Nyiszli came to the United States in the summer of 1939, and remained until February

of 1940, as a member of the Rumanian delegation to the World's Fair. — Tr[anslator].

To investigate this statement, I first consulted literature on the famous World's Fair of 1939–40, which was held in New York, and learned that the records of the fair are held by a division of the New York Public Library System. I contacted that department, and although they were able to locate and examine the records of the Romanian delegation to the fair, they could find no mention of Dr. Nyiszli.

Another avenue of investigation proved more successful. In Joseph J. Culligan's book *You, Too, Can Find Anybody*, I discovered that the National Archives contained records of arrivals by foreigners at many ports in the United States for much of the twentieth century. I cajoled a good friend into traveling to the Archives in Washington, D.C. Using the time-consuming but valuable Soundex coding system, which transforms a name into a numeric code that indicates how it sounds, rather than how it is spelled, my energetic associate was at last able to locate Dr. Nyiszli on the passenger manifest of a ship called *Nea Hellas*, which had sailed from Piraeus in Greece and arrived in New York City on December 1, 1939.

The exact citation was found in National Archives Passenger Lists, Roll 6427, Volumes 13,836–13,837, New York Passenger List Number 15, and lists the following information for Dr. Nyiszli:

Family Name: Nyiszli
Given Name: Nicolae
Age in Years: 38
Sex: Male
Married or Single: Married
Calling or Occupation: M. Doctor
Nationality: Rumania
Race or people: Hebrew [a handwritten correction to the typed "Rumanian"]
Place of birth: Simleul, Rumania

Notice that Nyiszli's age in this document tallies with the date of birth given in the short life history at the end of his doctoral dissertation, June 17, 1901. He would have been thirty-eight when he received his passport in August 1939, and when he arrived in New York City in December 1939. The passenger list partially confirmed the translator's footnote in *Auschwitz*, and provided further evidence that Miklos Nyiszli was a real person.

Nyiszli's Deposition in 1945

Leafing through Robert Jay Lifton's *The Nazi Doctors* one day, I noticed that Dr. Nyiszli was frequently mentioned, and bought the book on the spot. Especially interesting was the citation of a deposition of Dr. Nyiszli, dated July 28, 1945, hitherto unknown to me. I contacted Dr. Lifton through his staff in New York, and learned that his researchers had discovered the document in Hungary. Dr. Lifton's staff graciously provided me with a copy of an English translation of the deposition. This testimony, unmentioned in the Auschwitz literature before Dr. Lifton's discovery, is entitled, "Deposition: Miklof Nyifcli [*sic*] A Physician from Nagyvarod in Hungary," and dated July 28, 1945.

There are several unmistakable parallels between this document and Dr. Nyiszli's later book, but noticeable differences too. Among the parallels were his selection to perform autopsies by Dr. Mengele, his residence in crematorium 1, and his unusual assertion that the victims of the gas chamber at crematorium 1 were executed with chlorine granules. "The ganuales [*sic*] fell down and through contact with the air, a chlorine gas was produced which within five to ten minutes caused death through agonizing suffocation." This last point is of great interest, because in the earlier editions of Nyiszli's book the death of the Jews was accomplished by poisoning by chlorine gas. The original 1947 Hungarian edition states: "On one of the boxes they press in the top of a snap and they spill its contents – bean-sized, lilac-colored granular material – into the opening. The spilled material is cyclone or the granular form of chlorine; it immediately becomes gas upon contact with air." The French Julliard edition of 1961 says the same, but in the corresponding passage in my 1997 edition the equation of "cyclone" (Zyklon) and chlorine gas is eliminated. A translator's footnote, however, states:

> In reply to a query concerning the origin and composition of cyclon gas, Dr. Nyiszli wrote that it was manufactured during the war by the IG Farben Co., and that, although it was classified as Geheimmittel, that is, confidential or secret, he was able to ascertain that the name 'cyclon' came from the abbreviation of its essential elements: cyanide, chlorine and nitrogen. During the Nuremberg trials the Farben Co. claimed that it had been manufactured only as a disinfectant. However, as Dr. Nyiszli pointed out in his testimony, there were two types of cyclon in existence, type A and type B. They came in identical containers; only the marking A and B differentiated them. Type A was a disinfectant; type B was used to exterminate millions. — Tr. (p. 111)

Though I can understand how Dr. Nyiszli might make an "educated guess" in discussing Zyklon B, it is rather amazing that such material could still be printed about the Holocaust (or, as I prefer, "Judenausrottung") in 1997. In fact, Zyklon A had been discontinued years before the Second World War; Zyklon B was not a secret, nor did it emit chlorine gas; and Gerhard Peters, the agent for the manufacturer, DEGESCH, insisted that he and his company had had no idea that Zyklon B was being used to murder Jews. (Given Hitler's decree on euthanasia, as well as his "humane" comment in his last will, Zyklon B would have been most inappropriate, although I believe that it was in fact used at Auschwitz, through great ignorance of its effects.)

The differences between Nyiszli's deposition of 1945 and his subsequent book are marked, and in some cases irreconcilable. For example, Nyiszli states in his deposition that he arrived at Auschwitz on May 22, 1944, stayed one day, and then was transferred to a labor detail in the sub-camp Monowitz. After about two weeks (thus in June 1944), all doctors with experience in pathology were asked to report to the authorities. Nyiszli and one other doctor (evidently a Hungarian who had worked at Strasbourg University) did so, and were taken to crematorium 1 at Birkenau. After several hours Dr. Mengele appeared, and examined the two doctors. In *Auschwitz*, Nyiszli never goes to Monowitz; is recruited as a pathologist by Dr. Mengele in May, not June, 1944; and his fellow pathologist has disappeared!

In his deposition, Nyiszli describes his and the other pathologist's duties as including taking the measurements of abnormal people, who were then shot by a German officer working for Mengele. The two doctors would then autopsy the victims, after which they would dissolve the bodies and ship the bones to a renowned anthropological institute in Berlin-Dahlem. On one night, according to Nyiszli, Mengele ordered the two pathologists to assist him with a group of fourteen Gypsy twins. Nyiszli, ordered by Mengele, undressed a fourteen-year-old girl, and placed her on the dissection table, whereupon Mengele gave her a shot to cause sleep, then killed her with a chloroform injection. She was then removed to another location. The remaining thirteen twins were one by one treated in the same manner. When all fourteen twins were dead, Mengele asked Nyiszli and his colleague how fast they could do the autopsies. They told him four a day, to which Mengele agreed. Interestingly, and disconcertingly, this story is omitted from *Auschwitz*. Dr. Lifton and I believe that it was left out due to Nyiszli's admitted involvement in the murders. In the absence of the threat of his own death, Nyiszli could be considered an accomplice.

Another oddity is this description of cleaning out the crematorium gas chamber: "The special command rinsed off the corpses with a water hose and then began the transport of the corpses in an elevator up to the boiler room." Note that here Nyiszli correctly lists crematorium 1 as having one elevator, not four, as in his book.

At the end of his 1945 deposition, Nyiszli mentioned that all personnel of the Sonderkommando were killed on November 17, 1944 — except for the doctors who worked for Mengele, and their assistants. They were ordered away from the machine guns by Dr. Mengele himself: he needed their further help for his racial biology work. In *Auschwitz*, however, Dr. Mengele saves Nyiszli and the others on the date of the Auschwitz camp revolt a month earlier, which goes unmentioned in his deposition.

Several Wartime Witnesses to Dr. Nyiszli at Auschwitz

Filip Müller, a member of the Sonderkommando at Birkenau, has stated several times outside of his well-known book that he knew Dr. Nyiszli at Auschwitz. In correspondence with John Bennett in 1980, he wrote, "Your justified questions demonstrate that you are very familiar with the concentration camp literature which unfortunately does not always present correct testimonies. Many legends have been written about this tragic truth and a few falsehoods have crept into the writing of Dr. Nyiszli." Further: "I got to know Dr. Nyszli [*sic*] very well in early summer 1944. He had to work in the Sonderkommando with his colleagues, Prof. Görög and others, as a pathologist for Dr. Mengele. He was an outstanding and optimistic man ... I never saw Dr. Nyiszli again after the war. He is supposed to have died in 1949-1950." Thus, according to Müller, Nyiszli was a pathologist for Mengele at Birkenau, but his book contained at least a few falsehoods. Müller also testified about Dr. Nyiszli during the 1964 Frankfurt "Auschwitz Trial." In Hermann Langbein's account of the trial, Müller stated:

> When in the year 1944 the Hungarian transports came, two Hungarian pathologists were brought into the crematory, where they stood available to Dr. Mengele. One was named Dr. Nyiszli. I saw once that Dr. Nyiszli had to put the corpse of a hunchbacked person into a container in which there were salts or acids in order

to get the skeleton of this person. I also saw how the flesh was cut away from the thighs of those who had been shot dead.

Notice that Müller mentions Nyiszli dissolving a corpse to obtain a skeleton (also in *Auschwitz*), and the cutting of flesh from corpses (mentioned only in the original Hungarian version of Nyiszli's book). He also states that two Hungarian pathologists worked for Mengele.

Further confirmation of Nyiszli's presence at Auschwitz was supplied by a very helpful associate of Dr. Lifton, who sent me two testimonies about Dr. Mengele that mentioned Nyiszli. Milton Buki from Poland had this to say: "The suspect [Mengele] also went several times into that room where the prisoner's [*sic*] doctors were busy with the dissection of the dead bodies. From the prisoner's [*sic*] doctors, of which we had several ones, I only knew Dr. Niczly [*sic*] by name. He was an imposing presence, a bit fat ..." The description "a bit fat" is certainly unusual for an inmate at Auschwitz-Birkenau, and might indicate Nyiszli's favor with Dr. Mengele.

From Lifton's files as well came the following statement by Mrs. Jozsef Szabo, a Hungarian deported to Auschwitz:

> ... in September 1944, in the block of the twins, an approximately thirty-year-old woman who came from Szombathely died of disease. Her dates are not known to me. The corpse of this woman, fully unclothed, four of us carried on a board to the crematorium. I do not remember which number the crematorium had, I can only remember that the way thither led through a wooded terrain. We knocked on the iron door of the crematorium, whereupon several persons in white coats opened [it] to us. Over to these we gave the dead [woman] on whose breast a large 'Z' was drawn. Then a [female] companion, who was helping with the carrying of the corpse, commented [that] she had recognized Dr. Nyiszlit Miklos [*sic*], a deported physician, as she said, she knew Nyiszlit still from Nagyvara [*sic*].

Frau Szabo's description of the crematorium to which the body was delivered as near wooded terrain agrees in part with Nyiszli's book, which states that in late 1944 he was transferred to Birkenau crematorium 4, which was in a wooded area. I learned of other reports (some unfavorable) of Dr. Nyiszli assisting Dr. Mengele at Birkenau, but since they appear in psychiatric interviews, they are at present closed to the public.

First Appearance of Nyiszli's Auschwitz Book

Following up on the Yale librarian's recollection of reading Nyiszli's book in the pages of the Budapest newspaper *Vilag* ("World"), I corresponded with two Hungarians with library connections. They kindly assisted me in locating, then copying the entire book from back issues of *Vilag*. Here at last was the long-sought original edition of Nyiszli's book! In the newspaper version, which ran serially from February 16, 1947, through April 5, 1947, Nyiszli's book consisted of forty-one chapters and an epilogue. Its title was: "I Was Mengele's Autopsy Doctor in Auschwitz: A Hungarian Doctor's Diary from Hell."

In the days before Nyiszli's book appeared for the first time, in the pages of *Vilag*, the newspaper ran three ads to publicize the book. English translations of those ads follow:

> *Vilag*, February 14, 1947
>
> Chief physician Dr. Mengele directed 660 thousand people "to the left" ...
>
> Gondor Ferenc's paper, the *Ember* ["Man"], published an interesting open letter from Budapest titled "This Is How Chief Physician Mengele Killed Aggie Zsolt's little girl." The author of the letter, Aggie Zsolt, has written down with moving words, how her thirteen-year-old little daughter was taken away on October 18, 1944, "by the notorious yellow car of the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp."
>
> Chief physician Dr. Mengele's "pleasantly ingratiating voice" resounded again this day, and one of the cruelest mass murderers in world history again separated out the "ladies," as he liked to call, sarcastically, his victims before death by gassing. Whomever Mengele's fluted voice directed to the left was gassed to death that day, and altogether the German chief physician of Auschwitz directed 660,000 victims "to the left."
>
> Dr. Miklos Nyiszli of Nagyvarad is the only surviving direct eyewitness to the mass murders in Auschwitz. The doctor kept a diary, titled "I Was Mengele's Autopsy Doctor in Auschwitz," on the infernal events in the Nazi hell.
>
> Starting February 16, these world-important documents [*sic*] will be published serially in *Vilag*.

Vilag, February 14, 1947

I was Mengele's autopsy doctor in Auschwitz. Not a novel! [Hungarian: "Nem regény!"] A Hungarian doctor's diary from the Nazi hell.

The only Hungarian eyewitness to the Nazis' mass murders in Auschwitz, Dr. Miklos Nyiszli, medical doctor, has described with cold objectivity how the Nazi butchers killed two million innocent people — Christians, Jews, Hungarians, Russians, Poles, Czechs — in Auschwitz. The types of death: gas, injection, shooting in the back of the head, the bonfire, flame thrower. Every four months they killed the auxiliary personnel, so there would be no eyewitnesses. The story of the only revolt in Auschwitz.

Starting February 15 [*sic*], this world-important document will be published serially in *Vilag.*

Vilag, February 15, 1947

What did the only surviving eyewitness of the mass murders in Auschwitz record in his diary?

Vilag begins publication tomorrow of the memoirs of Mengele's autopsy doctor.

Tomorrow, Saturday, *Vilag* will begin serialization the diary of Dr. Miklos Nyiszli of Nagyvarad, titled, "I Was Mengele's Autopsy Doctor in Auschwitz." Dr. Miklos Nyiszli, the only surviving direct witness of the mass murders, did not write a novel [Hungarian: "nem regényt"], but endeavored to record his hellish experiences factually.

He makes the following statement in the introduction of his diary:

"The undersigned Dr. Miklos Nyiszli was a doctor — bearing the tattooed number A.8450. As a concentration camp prisoner, [I] wrote the work that appears under my authorship, which contains the darkest pages of the history of humankind, free from all emotion, in accord with reality, avoiding the smallest exaggeration and embellishment, as a direct observer of the work of the crematoriums and bonfires of Auschwitz, in which millions of fathers, mothers, and children were consumed. As the doctor of the crematoriums of Auschwitz, I wrote innumerable autopsy and medical reports and signed them with my tattoo number. These were countersigned by Dr. Mengele, and then mailed to one of the world's most distinguished medical forums, the Berlin-Dahlem Institut für Rassenbiologische und Anthropologische Forschungen. In writing this, I am not striving for literary success. I was not a writer, I was a doctor, when I experienced horrors beyond imagination, and now they have been recorded, not with a reporter's pen, but with a doctor's."

It will be observed that the newspaper made some rather extravagant claims in advertising Nyiszli's book. According to *Vilag*, Nyiszli was the only surviving witness (one ad says "Hungarian witness") to the Nazi mass murder at Auschwitz, and the newspaper was publishing the diary he had kept in the Birkenau crematorium.

The first published version of Nyiszli's book is important for determining the truth concerning various points which revisionists have attacked over the years. We shall now list several of these.

Nyiszli's Auschwitz Errors

On February 23, 1947, *Vilag* published the seventh installment, titled "20,000 Murders Daily," which included this passage:

> The corpses turn to ash in 20 minutes. The crematorium has 15 ovens. This means the burning of 5,000 people per day. Four crematoriums operate at that same capacity. A total of 20,000 people a day pass through the gas chambers and from there to the incineration ovens. The souls of 20,000 innocent people depart, up the gigantic chimneys. Nothing more remains of them here than a heap of ash in the courtyard of the crematorium, whence trucks take it to the flowing Vistula about 2 kilometers from here."

Among the notable mistakes in this passage is the claim that Birkenau's four crematoria each had fifteen ovens. In fact, crematoria 1 and 2 had fifteen each, but crematoria 3 and 4 had eight ovens.

According to *Auschwitz*, in the summer of 1944 Nyiszli learned that the Birkenau had been constructed in bad winter weather by ten thousand prisoners, and had been in operation killing people for four years. The *Vilag* edition concurs: four years in operation. Yet, at the rate per day stated in the *Vilag* excerpt above, the victims of the gas chambers and the crematoria would add up to about twenty-nine million, not counting crematorium victims after summer, 1944, or victims killed in other ways. Nyiszli's claim that the crematoria were operating in 1940 is belied by the Auschwitz records,

which show that they were completed in 1943.

"Later I learned that the Auschwitz KZ had, at certain periods, held more than 100,000 people within its enclosure of electrified barbed wire." Thus reads the English version of Nyiszli. In the French edition, however, Nyiszli claims that the camp had sometimes held over 500,000 inmates, a gross exaggeration of the actual maximum figure. But it is the French version that is faithful to the Hungarian original, wherein Nyiszli specified 500,000.

The English and the French versions state that there were four large elevators to haul the murdered victims up to the cremation ovens on the ground floor of Birkenau crematorium 1. My hypothesis that this was a transcriber's error for the single elevator indicated by the building's blueprints and ruins had been shaken by my discovery, from Dr. Nyiszli's friend, that Nyiszli had written the book himself. Now I learned that the original Hungarian edition translates: "This is how they pull the bodies, made slippery from water, to the elevators in the neighboring place. Four large freight elevators are working here. They put the dead on these, twenty, twenty-five to an elevator." Worse, in a later installment in the original *Vilag* version, Nyiszli again refers to "elevators." Worse still, in a passage that appears only in the newspaper edition, there is reference to the "elevators" being "giant" (a different Hungarian word than that for "large") in size, another blow to my theory of a transcription error in the original Hungarian.

> This room is as big as the dressing room ["about 200 meters long"], just that the benches and hangers are missing. In the middle of the room, placed about 30 meters apart from one another, columns stretch from the cement floor to the ceiling. Not supporting columns, but square iron-tin pipes, their sides everywhere full of holes like a screen. The sub-officer holds four green-colored tin boxes in his hands. They step on the grass, where thirty meters apart from one another low cement chimneys are sticking out of the ground.

While this description is self-contradictory, and also contradicts the blueprints and the ruins of crematorium 1, the author's length for the gas chamber there is clear from the reference to the size of the dressing room: "about 200 meters long." In reality, this exaggerates the actual length of the room in question by nearly seven-fold: the actual room is 30 meters long.

'Comrade Doctor'

After the last installment of Dr. Nyiszli's book appeared, for several days *Vilag* ran letters to the editor on the serial, some of them quite critical. Nyiszli himself wrote responses to two critics (one of whom was a writer well known in Hungary) who had attacked him for his conduct during and after the war. Nyiszli's replies were published as separate letters in *Vilag* on April 10, 1947. In the first, Nyiszli wrote that his accuser was "in this matter truly a lay person," uncomprehending of the amazing reality of Auschwitz, "the hell of hells." "In this gigantic death factory which pushes every apocalyptical imagining into the background, Dr. Mengele was the satanic factory boss ... I do not feel guilty ... I also do not feel guilty that after I made my way home and the memories of my traumatic experiences calmed, I dared to write my diary and objectively present the public with truthful documents on the secrets, heretofore unknown, of the death factory in Auschwitz. I did not seek or chase after sensations, much less material advantage."

The second letter Nyiszli responded to was more vindictive. It reads in part, "This Nyiszli, who through long [newspaper] columns sorts knocked out teeth, smoking crematoriums, corpses shot to death, invoking his instinct for self-preservation, did everything possible to earn the Germans' satisfaction. Now he saddles fortune and reaps the laurels, as probably the only Jew who profited from Mengele." Nyiszli responded to this attack in a long letter, stating that the author (who had served in the German-allied Hungarian army as a corporal) should have been ashamed to have served under Admiral Horthy (Hungary's wartime leader). Nyiszli claimed to saved many lives at Auschwitz. Then, flexing his muscles, Nyiszli blustered: "... 'this Nyiszli,' coming from a corporal. Would it be too much to call me 'Doctor'? In the Communist Party, of which I am a member, they call me 'Comrade Doctor,' and that's the way it should be."

The next mention of Nyiszli in *Vilag*, so far as I have been able to ascertain, came on September 30, 1947, when an article reported on his summons to Nuremberg for the trial of IG Farben (case number six before the Nuremberg Military Tribunal). I regard this article as critical to understanding the true nature of Dr. Nyiszli's book on Auschwitz: it provides a solution which makes sense of all the incorrect information contained therein, and allows Nyiszli's other statements to be examined and assessed independently of his book.

Mengele's Autopsy Doctor, Doctor Nyiszli, as

Crown Witness in Nuremberg

Following its serial publication by *Vilag*, Dr. Miklos Nyiszli's Auschwitz diary has gone all over the world. The extremely interesting novel [again, "regény" in Hungarian] of experience entitled, "I Was Mengele's Autopsy Doctor" has been one of the most enduring documents of the German horror.

Dr. Miklos Nyiszli, of Nagyvarad, has now received an interesting invitation from the supreme court for war criminals, or rather, the Allied tribunal headquartered in Nuremberg. Russian delegate E. E. Minskoff signed the letter summoning Miklos Nyiszli before the highest tribunal. The expansive communication lists in several points the questions which the Nuremberg tribunal will put to Miklos Nyiszli, the most competent prosecution witness. The first question is: Are you aware of the inhumane methods of treatment employed in the IG Farben concentration camp?

As is known, 40,000 prisoners worked in the so-called "Monowitz" camp for the Germans. Most of them were brought from the eastern territories. English pilots and other Allied soldiers were prisoners in this camp. Doctor Nyiszli was an inmate of this terrible camp for two weeks ...

> ... Dr. Nyiszli arrived in Budapest and will spend a day here in transit. We spoke with the author of the famous book, who said the following: "I strove to gather all the data so that I can be at the disposal of the Supreme Tribunal [*sic*] in Nuremberg in this horrible trial of humanity. Unfortunately, I cannot furnish written evidence, for I myself escaped from the Auschwitz camp with just the clothes on my body. But I am taking all my notes with me, and of course some copies of my book. I will travel to Nuremberg by plane, and I will stay for 2–3 weeks.

Several details of this newspaper article can be confirmed from other sources. Visiting the National Archives, I learned that among their records of the Nuremberg trials are two card catalogs containing information about witnesses in the war crimes trials. Dr. Nyiszli is listed in both of them. His cards list him as "Dr. Nicolae Nyiszli, born June 17, 1901 in Simleul-Silvaniei, requested as a voluntary witness by Minskoff." I also came across an affidavit (Nuremberg document NI-11710), dated October 8, 1947, by accident, while examining an alphabetical listing of various witnesses from the Nuremberg trials, where the affidavit was misfiled under the last name "Nicolae." This was for me a wonderful find, although I later learned that the outstanding researcher Carlo Mattogno, the premier revisionist writer on Nyiszli, had already discovered it.

NI-11710 has much in common with Nyiszli's 1945 deposition. It mentions his arrival at Auschwitz; his transfer to Monowitz, and his work there on a labor crew; and his subsequent transfer (along with an unnamed pathologist) to Birkenau, where he began work as a crematorium pathologist for Dr. Mengele. What is different about the affidavit is its partial emphasis upon the Monowitz sub-camp. It also has a rather subdued section on how gassings were conducted at the Birkenau crematorium, with nothing about the four giant elevators to a crematorium or the 200-meter-long gas chambers which appear in his book.

REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

NYISZLI, Nicolae Dr. V.W."E" Loc: Oradea
Str. Vlahuta 44.
Romania
Birth: 17.6.1901 in Simleul-Silvaniei

Oct.47 Req.for Trans.
3 Oct.47 Arrived Sprecher (Minskoff)

A copy of Nyiszli's witness card for the IG Farben trial. His testimony was based on his professed experiences at the Auschwitz sub-camp Monowitz, which he omitted entirely from his *Auschwitz*.

Although Dr. Nyiszli was summoned to Nuremberg to testify in the IG Farben trial, he was not called to the stand, presumably because he was only at Monowitz for about two weeks, and could provide little in the way of useful evidence. At some point in the trial, he was allowed to return home to Romania.

An Interview with Dr. Nyiszli's Granddaughter

Information about Nyiszli's subsequent life were graciously provided to me by his granddaughter Monica, whom I was able to locate though the kind help of the Romanian government and a Jewish organization there. Dr. Nyiszli and his wife Margareta had one daughter, Susanna, born in 1929, while Dr. Nyiszli was attending medical school in Breslau. Susanna had indeed married a gentile, a Romanian cavalry officer, in 1952, and their daughter (and Nyiszli's granddaughter) Monica was born in 1955. Miklos Nyiszli passed away on May 5, 1956; his daughter Susanna passed away in 1983. Before his death, the Romanian secret police placed Nyiszli under investigation for "cosmopolitanism," perhaps in part because of his correspondence with people in the West. About fifteen years after Nyiszli's death, when Monica was around sixteen, the secret police confiscated some of his papers, including a map he had drawn of Birkenau. It was not returned.

Conclusions about Nyiszli's Book and His Other Writings

When I read in the September 30, 1947, *Vilag* article that Miklos Nyiszli's book on his experiences at Auschwitz was a novel, it was as if a blindfold had fallen from my eyes. I had never considered this possibility before, but it certainly made sense on reading the article. It not only explained the inflated figures, the factual errors, and the singular account of the Sonderkommandos (thirteen in all!); it also removed all difficulties of "explaining away the details." *Auschwitz* is a novel. If a character in a novel meets a real personage, there is no historical issue to resolve. Dr. Nyiszli's 1945 deposition and his 1947 affidavit disagree with the book on many details because they are recording what he actually thought was the truth, while the book was deliberately crafted as a historical novel.

Within a few years of *Vilag*'s admission that the book was a novel, it was translated into French and German, and English, and wrongly declared to be an authentic history. This untruth aroused a storm of criticism, starting with the founder of Holocaust revisionism, Paul Rassinier, who himself had been a prisoner of the German concentration camp system for helping Jews under Nazi domination. While Rassinier's questions were justifiable on many points, they are moot, because Dr. Nyiszli's published treatment of Auschwitz was knowingly written as historical fiction, which accounts for its disconcerting mixture of truth and non-truth.

Thus the revisionists, although sometimes off course, were correct all along in concluding that there were serious problems with *Auschwitz*. For example Carlo Mattogno's critique, *Medico ad Auschwitz: Anatomia di un falso,* is a wonderful treatment, exhaustive and extremely thorough. Meanwhile, the defenders, translators, and publishers of the Nyiszli book have dealt with the revisionists' criticisms with silence, or by deliberately changing sections of Nyiszli's novel without advertising that. What is needed now is an annotated edition of the original book, along with a complete collection of Dr. Nyiszli's writings and testimony on Auschwitz, to clear the air on this long-standing problem.

Acknowledgments

I would like to extend my thanks to the many people who were of great assistance to me in my extended search for information about Dr. Nyiszli and his writings. Included among those who deserve my great thanks are: Steve Chaitow, Robert Jay Lifton, Dr. John Drickamer, Rev. Daniel Borsay, Amy Hackett, Lucy Silva, Frank Gyorgyey, Arpad Benedek, Stephen Reich, Eda Pal, Jozsef Tudomanyegyetem, and Gazella Barna. Without their help, I would have achieved little. Special thanks to Monica, Dr. Nyiszli's granddaughter, to whom I wish the best.

Thanks

We've stirred up things a lot since the first issue of *The Journal of Historical Review* came out in the spring of 1980 — 21 years ago. Without the staunch support of you, our subscribers, it couldn't have survived. So please keep sending those clippings, the helpful and critical comments on our work, the informative articles, and the extra boost over and above the subscription price. It's our life blood. To everyone who has helped keep the *Journal* alive, our sincerest thanks.

Waging and Winning the Information War

ERNST ZÜNDEL

IT'S A REAL PLEASURE FOR ME TO BE HERE. I always love to come to an IHR conference, because it lets you put faces with names. For instance, this morning I met a lovely black lady, young, pretty. I soon found out that I've been talking to this woman for four or five years on the telephone. Only when she spoke to me did I realize, "Ah! This is my telephone partner, Anita!" So it's nice to put faces with names. It's one thing to go over thousands of names in your office, but then to come here and read people's badges and think, "Imagine that! This white-haired man, that white-haired lady has been helping me with my court fights for two decades, and I'm meeting them face to face for the first time." There is something very human, very touching about this, and I think that's what has sustained me, the knowledge that we have loyal friends and comrades that year in, year out, tolerate your peccadillos.

UFOs to the Rescue

Professor Butz has always been a little leery of me, because in my distant past I published books on UFOs. What kind of a revisionist is that? And yet, whenever we needed help from Professor Butz — good advice, sound advice — he was always there. He forgave me that I was a little weird when it came to those books. But the Jewish side of the equation hasn't forgiven me for my UFO books: there are two or three UFO sites on the Internet with fake Zündel names, spelled Z-u-n-d-l, that advertise my old UFO books to embarrass me. Well, I'm still getting orders for these books — from Iran, from Johannesburg, from Brazil — at 1972 prices, naturally. I simply photocopy the original German or English edition, which otherwise I couldn't give away and which these Jewish people are advertising free of charge. You know, I'm a little embarrassed about these books myself, and yet, this way they' re selling for me. Am I to blame for filling a market niche?

I was interviewed by Errol Morris in Boston for *Mr. Death*, his film about Fred Leuchter. Errol Morris is a very gifted film-maker. He's invented a camera he calls the "Interrotron." It has a kind of glass plate in front of it, on which he appears to the person being interviewed while he's off in another room. You look directly into the lens of the camera, and that creates an amazing effect. When you appear on the big screen, you're talking directly to everybody in the audience, because the camera's pointing right at you, and you're looking right into the camera. It is totally different from being filmed by a video camera, which allows you to shift this way and that. As Morris put very good questions to me in his four-hour interview, it suddenly dawned on me that

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For some twenty years, Ernst Zündel was the leading force for Holocaust revisionism in Canada. With uncanny instinct for turning the tables against his attackers in the media and in the courts, Zündel converted his two trials for Holocaust "denial" in the 1980s into trials of Holocaust dogma. During those trials he commissioned the Leuchter report, won over David Irving, and compiled an unmatched trial record of revisionist research. Together with his wife, Ingrid Rimland, Ernst Zündel now lives and works in the United States. This essay is an edited version of the author's lecture to IHR's 13th conference (May 2000).

my initial Holocaust trials and revisionist publications were financed in considerable part by people who had bought my UFO books. There's something for the ADL's file! I realized, too, that Fred Leuchter winged his way to Poland on a sizeable donation from a lady who was one of my UFO fans, and who had bequeathed a substantial amount of money to me in 1985, with which I was able to pay much of my first trial. She came to me through the UFO books. All I'm telling you is that we revisionists have to be tolerant, not only of our opposition, but of ourselves. For where would Ernst have been without all that UFO money?

John Sack

I want to thank Greg Raven, Mark Weber, Ted O'Keefe, Ron Gray, and all the others who helped make this conference possible. It is really important, really important. Many people have told me how invigorating this experience of coming together without hostility has been. Like all movements, and revisionism is a historical movement, we have what we Germans call *Flugelkämpfe*, factional rivalries. The nice thing about revisionists is that we have been really very tolerant of one another. What makes us pliable, viable, and dangerous to our enemies is that we're not calcified and dogmatic.

John Sack has republished his book *An Eye for an Eye*. John and I had it out in four-hour sessions in which I told him, "John, you can't publish this. It's full of lies about Auschwitz from these Jewish 'eyewitnesses.'" And yet, I'm quite glad to see that the book has been republished because this Jewish writer, John Sack, has for the first time provided the American public with a detailed description of the tortures and the humiliation and the suffering of German people in Silesia. When I assailed him with my criticisms, he was gracious enough, and he told me, "Ernst, I am just quoting what these people said." And in a way, you see, the only choice he had was not to let them speak. What a one-sided book that would have been!

We revisionists are so tolerant that we say, "All right, John Sack, half of your book is historical bunk that's been refuted by Faurisson and many other revisionists, but the other half book is worthwhile, and you are welcome in our midst." That's what I like about us. Or take Charles Provan: he used to believe in the gas chambers. Then he became a revisionist and he didn't believe in them. The next time I hear from my friend Charles Provan, he's telling me, "Ernst, I believe that you could put eight hundred people in a gas chamber at Treblinka." "Charles," I said, "come on now, somewhere down the road you're going to have to recant once again, and you're going to embarrass yourself" — although everybody has the right to embarrass himself. The fact that here we have a man who once believed in the gas chambers, then disbelieved, and then went back to believing in them doesn't mean we're going to bar the doors to him. Charles Provan does extremely good revisionist work in many other areas, and I have interviewed him several times for my radio broadcasts, which are heard all across the United States and Canada. I think that the IHR is quite correct in welcoming these two men here.

David Irving

That brings us to David Irving. I'm not going to preempt David Irving's time, but I think his recent trial is on everybody's mind, and I think that we should all view it from the same vantage point. I want it understood that there is nothing that we can change about the Irving-Lipstadt trial. The verdict is in. The condemnation is shrill. Our enemies are dancing in the streets. They are virtually drunk with victory. To outsiders, to those of you who haven't gone through trials this may seem frightening, and even ominous. But I can tell you that after every one of my many defeats in the courtroom, the headlines were as shrill. The condemnation was as vicious. They made my name dirt in Canada, which didn't prevent total strangers from walking up to me on the street, shaking my hand, patting me on the shoulder, fumbling in their pockets, and pulling out some money: "Ernst, that's for your case!" This after I've been condemned as the most evil neo-Nazi racist monster.

It's no different with David Irving. David Irving has done excellent revisionist work on the Third Reich. Although he says, "I'm not a revisionist," he means, perhaps "I'm not a gas chamber revisionist" — not that it helped him any. *We* know that, but I want to say that the concessions he made during the trial came as a shock only to us. To the man and woman in the street, who read the papers and listened to the newscasts, David Irving's concessions were meaningless. Do millions of people in England watching the evening news care whether 97,000 people allegedly did, or didn't die, in gas vans?

The larger picture is that, although we revisionists were disappointed, David Irving performed a sterling service. Take his cross-examination of that arrogant ignoramus, Jan Van Pelt. Reading the transcript, I wondered if David Irving had looked at Barbara Kulaszka's

book *Did Six Million Really Die?* to see how my attorney, Doug Christie, went after Raul Hilberg. That David Irving didn't, to my knowledge, consult Mark Weber, or Dr. Faurisson, or Doug Christie, or Barbara Kulaszka, or Dr. Butz before he brought suit against Penguin and Lipstadt means he is his own man. We revisionists had no alternative but to help him. Although David Irving sometimes strikes me as a prickly customer, I try to help him because I have a tremendous amount of admiration for this battling, courageous, handsome, and occasionally reckless man.

Yes, it was a setback. Yes, it would have been nice to have won. Realistically, though, I don't think there's a single person in this room who thought David Irving had much chance of winning. If he *had* fought a hardcore revisionist case, the written record of the trial, the transcripts and expert reports, would have been more revisionist, more historically accurate — that's really my only criticism. But it wouldn't have altered the outcome: a judgment so injudicious in its ferocity and in its nastiness to this man that it raises doubts about our opponents' self-confidence. I do not think that a system that feels secure in its power, let alone unassailable, would have needed to stoop to such personal vilification. The ad hominem attacks didn't reflect the mindset of people who feel secure or all-powerful. They betrayed a nervous twitching, and a shrillness, and to me their gloating seemed a bit contrived.

Worldwide Publicity

The worldwide avalanche of publicity unleashed by this Englishman will trouble our enemies for a long time to come. I think they realize that David Irving has put Holocaust revisionism on the map, certainly in the English-speaking world. I have a collection of the newspaper coverage in England. Now, British newspapers are the old-fashioned type, large enough in dimension to sleep on, like the big ones we used to have here in North America. During the Irving-Lipstadt trial they often ran full-page headlines, an inch high or more, and many times David Irving, who is admittedly one formidable-looking, and handsome, man, looked out at British newspaper readers with his serious demeanor and his fountain pen poised as if it were about to lance a boil. To me, as a graphic artist, and yes, as a propagandist, it was an advertiser's dream.

Certainly he lost. I lost, too. Had he won, the result would have been buried on page 34, in an article the size of business card. That's what happened to me.When I lost, it was always front-page news. But revisionism got name-brand recognition during the Irving trial, big time. You see, if you couple a story with a picture, you get eighty percent more attention paid to it by readers. All that's necessary in the short run, which is really the focus of modern merchandising, advertising, and propaganda, is brand recognition. There isn't a literate newspaper reader in all of England or Australia, and I dare say Canada or America, who wasn't confronted at one time or another with the story that this English historian, this English revisionist, an author who has written thirty-four books, believes that there is something drastically wrong with the Holocaust story. That quote of all quotes, "More people died on the back seat of Ted Kennedy's car at Chappaquiddick than died in the gas chamber at Auschwitz," went around the world in so many translations it's amazing. People will remember those words longer than they'll remember the ludicrous idea that 97,000 people were gassed in experimental gas vans.

Today many people are aware that there is something wrong fundamentally with the Holocaust story, and these people were able to go directly to the Web sites. During my trials I prayed for the opportunity to share the courtroom transcripts with thousands of people on the outside. Imagine how many Englishmen, Americans, Australians, New Zealanders, South Africans, Jews went to David Irving's Web site. It was addictive. For the first time, a trial was vicariously watched and analyzed by people around the globe, instantaneously. That was another benefit of the fallout from the Irving trial.

Bouncing Back

We will overcome the setback. There's absolutely no doubt in my mind that revisionism can do so. Our enemies are not all-powerful. They are human, and they can be defeated. This has just been proven by the South Lebanese Army fiasco in Lebanon. Now, you may say "Oh Ernst, that's stretching it." Well, let me tell you: it isn't. The reason these Hezbollah people won is this: they fought an informational campaign. In all modesty, I must tell you that in 1981 I was banned from the Canadian mail for publishing a booklet called "The West, War, and Islam." In it I had outlined to the Arab world: "Please don't spend any more money on hand-me-down, worn-out American or British military equipment. It's all garbage, and anyway, Israel always will get the state of the art in military hardware. You will never outgun these people in modern weaponry.

Although the Arabs cannot reverse this gap in mili-

tary technology, the Hezbollah found a way to fight back — with video cams and mini cams. They would go out with little patrols and film their guerrillas blowing up an Israeli truck with a rocket launcher. What a picture! Then they would take it to their community centers, and broadcast it over Arab television. The Israeli press, always hungry for sensational footage, would even play this Palestinian footage. So the Palestinians were able to reinforce their own people's staying power by saying, "Look, we're inflicting damage on the enemy," with video footage. At the same time they were working on the Jewish mothers whose sons were serving in southern Lebanon, weakening their will to resist because they were watching trucks with Jewish soldiers in them being blown up. Thus it was the informational campaign that weakened the Israelis' will to occupy Lebanon, even though they were armed to the teeth. These Palestinians managed to work on the mind of their enemies and virtually achieved what the Viet Cong achieved with Jane Fonda's footage in the United States in the Vietnam War. What I told the Arabs in 1981 has come true. Don't buy guns. Don't buy machine guns. Don't buy those rusty tanks or second-hand jets. Buy camcorders. Get on the Internet, and of course listen to Ernst's short-wave broadcasts. The pen is mightier than the sword.

What happened in southern Lebanon was revisionism. They certainly revised the borders. The Israelis slunk back, and what did their Lebanese vassals — I hate to insult Quisling — find when they got to the Israeli border? Their former trainers and teachers had their guns trained on them; suddenly they were no longer welcome. The kids in the streets of Gaza are going to remember that. They'll remember that Israel, too, has an Achilles heel. I wouldn't want to be an Israeli military strategist or political planner just now, because there's nothing that succeeds like success. Those teenaged Palestinian kids are going to say, "Our brothers up north did it, and we can do it too." While Israel's atomic stockpiles (which they don't admit to but everybody knows they have) sit idle in the desert, the kids are going to create havoc with their rocks. The film from the camcorders will be broadcast from Arafat's Palestinian television station, and it will go to work on the minds of Israeli mothers and Israeli veterans. Fatigue has set in, and Israel is an artificial creation. Israel as we have known it, that strutting, macho military power, throwing its weight around in the Middle East, may find itself humiliated, because there are so many Palestinians, so many Arabs, and so few Israelis. Nothing lasts forever.

Eastern Revisionism

While we build monuments to the six, five, four, three, one, million, whichever million you believe, in Eastern Europe, in the Baltic states, and in Belarus they're building monuments to SS men. Latvian and Estonian veterans of the SS are marching down the streets of their capitals with people on the curb cheering and saluting them. You don't hear much about that unless you're attuned to Eastern Europe, but that too is revisionism, and revisionism there is a movement that is just beginning to gather steam. It delights me that Jürgen Graf has had so many revisionist texts, so many of his own books quietly published in Russia. I have very good contacts with Russian nationalist publications, and the original version of *Did Six Million Really Die?* has been translated, expanded, improved upon, published, and reprinted in Russia. We've given the financially strapped Russian patriots revisionist works — about the "Holocaust," on my trials — in printing flats and on diskettes in Russian, so that all the Russian publisher has to do is run them off. As Jürgen said, there is an amazing thirst for knowledge and for understanding over there; and revisionists have more freedom in Russia than in the West. Can you believe that? We Western Europeans have always looked down on the "Russkies." We've always had a superiority complex about the East. Yet they can teach us a lesson when it comes to freedom, and courage, too, because there is more freedom for revisionists in Russia today than there is for German or French or Swiss revisionists in Western Europe.

The Future and the Internet

So, as we look around the globe, things don't look so dismal for us. Things actually look very good for revisionism. There's the Internet: Dr. Faurisson was telling me that Ahmed Rami, a former military officer from Morocco, has a Web site, and that recently it had 500,000 hits in a two week period. Imagine that! One nice thing about the Internet is that while you're sleeping, someone in Johannesburg or Brazil is looking at your Web site. Ingrid [Rimland]'s Zundelsite has just been completely revised. If you are Internet devotees, I suggest you go to the Zundelsite.org or Lebensraum.org. It's amazing what you can do today with this technology, absolutely amazing.

Of course there are frantic attempts to censor the Internet. In a recent decision by a French court, Yahoo is facing a fine of $97,000 every day, if they don't find

some way of blocking information that gets to French people. No, I don't know how this will all play out, but for the moment we are reaching millions, in the far-flung corners of the world. Ingrid puts out a daily bulletin, the ZGram. I've seen many of the letters that come in. A sheep farmer in Australia writes, "Dear Dr. Rimland, I'm not going out to tend my sheep before I've had my morning coffee and my ZGram." There are people right in this room who have just met Ingrid for the first time, but have long been reading her ZGrams. The Internet allows for worldwide, almost instantaneous contact with people of different cultures, races, nationalities, ages. What an age we live in! Why should we despair? The Simon Wiesenthal Center, B'nai B'rith Canada, all these self-appointed censors are quaking in their boots at all the intelligent, computer-literate young people who go to revisionist sites to research their term papers. Many of them come to the Zundelsite for information, something that never happened before the Internet. It's a phenomenal development, the democratization of information, the leveling of the playing field. Suddenly, on the computer screen, we look as important as any of the big boys.

Legal Woes

As I must now share with you, last week was a tough one: I lost in court four times. In each instance, I'm required to pay my opposition's legal costs. That hurts all the more because I hate to give money to the lawyers for B'nai B'rith Canada and the Simon Wiesenthal Center. These Jewish groups had appealed my victories of April 13, 1999, against the Human Rights Tribunal, and the judges saw things, not surprisingly to me, the way they did. The good news is that I've instructed my attorneys to ask for leave to appeal to the Supreme Court, because the cases that we have brought are very substantial cases that deal with fundamental issues, such as truth. The State has told me, "Truth is not a defense in this case." Now, truth is fundamental to any civilized court of law; it is the rock upon which any justice system is built. Whenever you enter the witness box, you are brought a Bible and told to put your hand on it and to swear "to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God." When they ask me to step into the witness box now, and to swear on the Bible, what do I say? "Yes, I, Ernst Zündel, will tell lies and nothing but lies — because truth is not a defense"?

I also lost my Security Intelligence Review Committee appeal. The Canadian Security Intelligence Service called me, without any foundation in truth or fact, a security threat to Canada. They delivered that smear in a note from the Minister of Immigration as I was rebuilding my house after it had been firebombed by Marxist terrorists. I was up on the third floor, ripping down the roof because it was completely charred. I looked down, and there was a man in a black suit handing a letter to one of my men. I didn't even have a roof on my burned-out house. Two weeks later I was sent a parcel bomb. The arsonists and the bombers have never been arrested, but the government had the nerve to call me, a man who has spent forty-four years in Canada, and an absolute advocate of Gandhi's non-violent protest methods, a security threat to that country. I have spent lots of money to reverse this disgusting labeling.

Venue Shopping

What's behind it all is that my opponents have gone institution shopping. Until now, they have lost in every venue. They lost the postal hearings. They were unable to deport me. They convicted me of the crime of spreading "false news," but I won on appeal in the Supreme Court. Finally, after losing every case against me, desperate to find a venue where they could prevail, they went to the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal. There they told me, "Truth is not a defense." Dr. Faurisson testified there, Mark Weber was an expert witness. They can tell how vicious, humiliating, and unconscionable was the behavior of the (mostly Jewish) Human Rights Commission lawyers. One of my associates remarked jokingly, "There's only one difference between these people and the mafia. They carry law degrees in their violin cases instead of Uzis." In the end, they're just as deadly. Their goal is to criminalize me, to convict me first before the Human Rights Tribunal, then before the Security Intelligence Review Committee, so that they can ship me off to the gulag of my native Germany.

Some people, even in our own ranks, have criticized me for spending too much money on court cases. A few have said that I'm addicted to the courtroom. Whoever believes that knows nothing about Ernst Zündel. I am the least prone to grace the inside of a court room. I cringe every morning I go to court. I'm an artist by trade. I'd much rather paint beautiful pictures. I'd just as soon study the Talmud as sit there going over words and phrases with lawyers. Every fiber of my being rebels against these court cases. But I had no choice: if I hadn't fought them I wouldn't be here. I wouldn't have been here in 1994. I would have been off to Germany in 1985, at the very latest, to suffer the same fate as Fredrick

Töben, Günther Deckert, Udo Walendy, in a land where there is no justice. The victorious Allies saw to that after 1945.

I do not battle in the courts because I like to. Please understand that, just as I understand that there exists what I call empathy, and donation, fatigue. The latest cases that our enemies have hurled at us are now so convoluted, so twisted, so talmudic that I can no longer proclaim that I'm tilting directly at the Holocaust windmill. It is now so complicated that even I have to call my lawyer and ask, "Barbara [Kulaszka], please, can you explain to me what the heck this means?"

Like the Lilliputians tying up Gulliver and pinning him down, that's what they're doing to me. That's what they plan for Jürgen Graf. It's really a tribute to Dr. Faurisson that they have been after him for so many years, because they fear him — and they fear us. People who are self-assured, people who have the truth on their side, can tolerate history being written the way things actually happened. They don't have resort to persecution. Most people understand that, so our struggle is worth fighting.

Doing What Needs to Be Done

Fred Töben was wondering whether he should return to Germany to appeal his sentence, at the risk of serving the rest of it. Well, I went back to Germany to appeal my conviction, because I'm one to fight when a principle is at stake. I went back, and they kept me there for five or six weeks. Finally, I had to fly back to Canada for a Supreme Court hearing four days before Christmas. Two days later I flew back to Germany just to be convicted, as I knew was going to happen anyway. So I paid $2,750 for a one-way ticket to Germany to get convicted. Yet, the court record is an important historical record. We are leaving a legacy to our people, to our children. We are also setting examples to those who watch us.

As for Fred Töben, I'll give him some advice. I would not go back there to collect my conviction by Heiko Klein. There is nobody in this room, there is nobody in the revisionist movement that demands that you impale yourself on the fixed bayonets of the German repressive system. Now, Udo Walendy had the choice of leaving Germany before he went to jail. He could have gone to Spain. Many of you here know this white-haired, blue-eyed, ramrod-straight German: he said "Nein. I cannot do it." He's served his first term, and now, although he's in his seventies, Udo Walendy is serving his second jail term, for nothing more than trying to bring truth to his German people. Ultimately it's Fred's personal choice, but to me there is no shame in recognizing overwhelming odds, so overwhelming that to attack frontally would be suicide. I don't think it's heroism to neutralize yourself. That's my honest opinion. Conviction is a foregone conclusion throughout Europe. Things have gone so far that an Austrian revisionist, the engineer Wolfgang Fröhlich, has had to seek asylum in the Iranian embassy. Seeing Europe, that once great continent, sunk so low, its people seemingly unable to liberate themselves, instead wallowing in wealth and forsaking all principle, fills me with shame. It is our job to fight back, by ringing the bell for freedom wherever we can, as loud as we can, as long as we can.

In closing, Mark Weber asked me, "Where do you think the IHR should be going?" There is still so much work to be done, so many minds to be liberated, so many people to be informed. The liberation of the Western world can only come through information. Only information will liberate our people — and revisionism is the tool. I'm not saying we cannot improve on what we have been doing. But I'm quite sure now that the IHR has turned the corner, that things are looking up, and that our outreach programs will improve. New topics will be touched on. New blood is coming in. New thinkers are emerging. Younger people are joining. This is an exciting time, and we are going to lick these people.

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"A people that does not know its own history cannot understand itself and its present. Only through an understanding of history can a people be fully aware of itself."

— Adalbert Stifter (1805-1868), German writer

The Holocaust in American Life

The Holocaust in American Life by Peter Novick. Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1999. Hardcover. 373 pages. $27.00. Index, source references.

Reviewed by Greg Raven

Promotion of Holocaust claims has been a boom industry of late, considering the run-away best-seller by Daniel Goldhagen (which claimed that all Germans were responsible for mass executions of Jews), the financial extortion of the Swiss banks and German businesses, the legal travails of anyone outside of the U.S. who has the temerity to question even the smallest Holocaust-related claim, and the daily onslaught of Holocaust-related articles, movies, television shows, and books that continues unabated.

Even so, there is also a counter-trend, in which a few non-revisionist authors are questioning — if not the details — the implications of the Holocaust in contemporary life. Among these are last year's *Selling the Holocaust* by Tim Cole, and this year's powerful *The Holocaust Industry* by Norman Finkelstein. Peter Novick's *The Holocaust in American Life* is another book is this fast-expanding genre.

Novick, a professor of history (University of Chicago), believes that the Holocaust became ubiquitous in American life because certain events, such as the kidnapping and trial of Adolf Eichmann, gradually led to the realization by American Jews of the importance of the Holocaust, and its value as a lesson for mankind. He presents Jewish immigrants to America after the Second World War as wanting to tell of their experiences during the war, but holding off, in an attempt to fit in (p. 158) until non-Jews in America became more receptive to their message, which according to Novick happened because we came to see Israel as an ally in the Middle East, in the aftermath of their June 1967 "Six Day War" against Egypt, Jordan, and Syria.

In the course of presenting his case, Novick, like Finkelstein, offers page after page of amazing acknowledgements regarding, among other things, the massive public relations campaign that turned the Jewish experience in Europe during the Second World War into "the Holocaust," and the uses to which it has been put by Jewish leaders and others. But where Finkelstein brings passion to his subject, Novick presents himself throughout as the calm, rational scholar, ever-sensitive to nuance and alternate viewpoints.

Whence 'the Holocaust'?

Even if you're not a revisionist, you might wonder why the experiences of a bunch of foreigners, which happened more than fifty years ago, half-way around the world, have become so central to modern American life. So does Novick (p. 2):

> The Holocaust took place thousands of miles from America's shores. Holocaust survivors or their descendants are a small fraction of 1 percent of the American population, and a small fraction of American Jewry as well.... Americans, including many American Jews, were largely unaware of what we now call the Holocaust while it was going on ... So, in addition to "why now?" we have to ask "why here?"

Novick is hardly the first person to observe that "the Holocaust," which we are now told is all-important, was barely mentioned before the late seventies, suggesting that the fate of the Jews during the war was for many years viewed as being little different from the fates of others. Novick concurs (p. 2):

> ... surely there were some American Jews ... for whom the Holocaust was a traumatic experience. But the available evidence doesn't suggest that, overall, American Jews (let alone American gentiles) were traumatized by the Holocaust, in any worthwhile sense of that term.

What changed? Novick disingenuously writes (p. 6) that "... Jews have taken the initiative in focusing attention on the Holocaust in this country."

Why Jews? Novick recounts (p. 7) that "The Holocaust, as virtually the only common denominator of American Jewish identity in the late twentieth century, has filled a need for a consensual symbol." As a result (p. 200):

> ... in what might be called American "folk Judaism" — less bound by tradition and less scrupulous about theological consistency — a de factor sacralization of the Holocaust has taken place.

For America's largely non-Orthodox Jews, this now has lead to the Holocaust "displacing Israel at the center of American Jewish consciousness" (p. 168). This has happened, Novick explains (p. 120), to those who think that history — including Holocaust history — has more to do with facts and context than with feelings and whim, that "Every generation frames the Holo-

caust, represents the Holocaust, in ways that suit its mood."

Lest anyone think that Americans have participated in this framing (as opposed to having it thrust upon them by what can only be called non-Americans), Novick later clarifies (p. 278) this point:

> For all of the extent to which the Holocaust has reverberated throughout American society, it's not clear that the Holocaust is an American collective memory in any worthwhile sense.

It's not as though no one has made an effort to connect Americans to the Holocaust, though (p. 235):

> Only a minority of the European Jews murdered by Hitler resembled middle-class Americans, but that's how they've been most often represented to American audiences.

Promotion

According to Novick, that's largely because American Jews have been doing the representing. Novick writes (p. 208):

> How did this European event come to loom so large in American consciousness? A good part of the answer is the fact ... that Jews play an important and influential role in Hollywood, the television industry, and the newspaper, magazine, and book publishing worlds. Anyone who would explain the massive attention the Holocaust has received in these media in recent years without reference to that fact is being naïve or disingenuous.

Jews in politics played their role (p. 208):

> What were, de jure, government initiatives were often, de facto, those of Jewish aides, simultaneously promoting projects in which they believed and helping their employers score points with Jewish constituents.

As Novick makes clear (p. 216), the reason politicians need to "score points with Jewish constituents" is because of Jewish power:

> [President Jimmy] Carter's initiative [to create the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum] was an attempt to placate American Jews, who were increasingly alienated by what they saw as the president's "excessive evenhandedness" in dealing with Israelis and Palestinians.

And how did the USHMM come into being? According to Novick (p. 195):

> It was American Jews' wealth and political influence that made it possible for them to bring to the Mall in Washington a monument to their weakness and vulnerability.

Pyramid Power

Novick also deals (pp. 8-9) extensively with the post-war victimization cult in America, going so far as to imply that those Jews in America today who claim victim status are doing so fraudulently (he calls it "vicariously"):

> American Jews were by far the wealthiest, best-educated, most influential, in-every-way-most-successful group in American society — a group that, compared to most other identifiable minority groups, suffered no measurable discrimination and no disadvantages on account of that minority status. But insofar as Jewish identity could be anchored in the agony of European Jewry, certification as (vicarious) victims could be claimed, with all the moral privilege accompanying such certification.

Novick acknowledges that Jews are atop the victimization pyramid, and notes (p. 223) that their only competition is from other Jews:

> ... unlike other groups that wanted to be recognized as victims of the Holocaust, gays do have political and cultural resources, and they don't face the same hostility to inclusion, based on prewar and wartime experience, encountered by Poles and Ukrainians. Their inclusion, moreover, could be seen as a contribution to the cause of combating homophobia. And many of their spokesmen, who press for inclusion, are Jewish.

By being "more equal" than others, one gains "moral capital." In this formulation, the revisionist movement isn't just to bring history into accord with the facts, but something far more sinister (p. 156):

> Holocaust deniers, according to David Singer of the American Jewish Committee [in 1993], seek to "rob the Jewish people and the state of Israel of the moral capital."

There's no point in Americans looking for the benefits of this moral capital in the media, politics, or any other cultural institution; Novick himself says (p. 230) that the campaign against Swiss banks is really just seizing the "moral high ground."

Novick, however, is so intent on proving that the rise of Israel led to the rise of Holocaust promotion, that he ignores events that nullify his thesis: Zionist terrorism prior to the formation of Israel, the appointment of terrorists to the highest offices in Israeli politics, Israel's

purchase of arms from Czechoslovakia, the kidnapping of Adolf Eichmann from Argentina, the Israeli attack on the USS *Liberty*, the UN resolution equating Zionism with racism, Israel's continuing defiance of the United Nations, Israel's collaboration with then-pariah South Africa in the development of nuclear weapons, Israel's own development of nuclear weapons, Israel's improper sales of weapons to everyone from the communists in China to Serbs in Kosovo, the 1973 attack on a Libyan airliner that resulted in the deaths of hundreds of civilians (p. 154), the Pollard spy scandal, and atrocites in occupied territories too numerous to mention here. If as Novick claims it was the public image of Israel that accounts for the tremendous increase in Holocaust propaganda, then why haven't these negative images of Israel counter-balanced the (largely false) image of an "embattled Israel"? The answer, which Novick acknowledges without examining it too closely, lies in the dominant power of American Jewry.

Jews and Communism

In the U.S., where for decades Jews have comprised between two and three percent of the population, Novick notes (p. 93):

> ... it was also correct, and becoming manifest, that a great many — perhaps most — American Communists in these years [1940s] were Jews.

You don't have to take his word for it (p. 92):

> Lucy Dawidowicz — later well known as an historian of the Holocaust, but in these years [after 1945] the American Jewish Committee's expert on Communism — kept running tabulations for the Committee on the percentage of Jews among "hostile witnesses" before various investigative bodies. Jews, she found, often made up 75 percent or more of the totals.

By the late forties, a time when Novick points out that Jewish leaders were promoting the "sameness" of European Jews and Americans, communists were invoking Holocaust claims to drive a wedge between the U.S. and West Germany. The Holocaust was also a pretext used by Julius Rosenberg to justify his espionage for the Soviet Union (p. 94).

Novick's treatment of the tension between the drive to promote "sameness" (that is, the view that Jews in America had nothing to do with communism) during the Cold War, and the fact that the communists were making Holocaust claims ("featuring the Holocaust was ... Communist Party policy"), is the most intriguing section of the book. Unfortunately, Novick never deals with the issues of how, by the late fifties and early sixties, the communist's distorted Holocaust claims came to be so widely known in America, or why, once the survivors felt free to express themselves, so little of this Soviet disinformation was repudiated.

Discards

You wouldn't expect Novick, a historian who is not above quoting (p. 56) the discredited "confessions" of Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Höss, to discard any part of the received Holocaust legend. Yet he does. The story that the corpses of Jews were turned into soap is "... now dismissed as without foundation by historians of the Holocaust" (p. 23). About Babi Yar, he writes (p. 22):

> Thus, after the Soviet recapture of Kiev, the *New York Times* correspondent traveling with the Red Army underlined that while Soviet officials claimed that tens of thousands of Jews had been killed at Babi Yar, "no witnesses to the shooting ... talked with the correspondents"; "it is impossible for this correspondent to judge the truth of falsity of the story told to us"; "there is little evidence in the ravine to prove or disprove the story."

Another oft-repeated Holocaust claim is that everyone knew there was a (secret) Nazi plan to exterminate the Jews, and no one did anything to stop it. Novick notes that it didn't seem to make much of an impression at the time (p. 105):

> Leo Bogart ... wrote a thesis on [postwar American Jewish response to the Holocaust].... One of his approaches ... was soliciting lengthy *written statements* from a number of young Jews. He found that except for two individuals who were in the armed forces in Europe at the end of the war, it did not appear that "the extermination of Europe's Jews had had any real emotional effect upon the writers of the statements, or that it has influenced their basic outlook."

As Arthur R. Butz pointed out at the IHR's Thirteenth Conference, statements such as these are a paradox ("How could they have known about it and not cared?") only if you postulate that there was something about which to care in the first place. If the alleged extermination did not happen as we have been told, then there is no paradox, and the statement seems self-explanatory.

Recently, there have been increasing accusations by

Jews that Pius XII did nothing to save European Jews during the War. Novick points out (p. 143), "... at the time of Pius's death in 1958 they [Jewish groups] had vied with each other in fulsome tributes to his wartime role in rescuing Jews."

In contrast to the position of Holocaust scribes such as Elie Wiesel and Deborah Lipstadt, who simultaneously claim that the Holocaust was unique, and that by being reminded of it constantly we can somehow apply (compare) it to other situations, Novick writes (p. 9):

> The assertion that the Holocaust is unique — like the claim that it is singularly incomprehensible or unrepresentable — is, in practice, deeply offensive.

Novick seems unconcerned (p. 156) that those who "universalize" the Holocaust are sometimes charged with plundering the "moral capital" it brings Jews.

The Survivors

Virtually all the Holocaust presentations being pushed on Americans are built on the testimony and statements of Jewish "survivors." Elie Wiesel has stated that any survivor has more to say about the Holocaust than any historian (though he also reminds us that it is impossible to put the Holocaust experience into words). Novick informs (p. 83) us what their contemporaries thought of this national treasure:

> American Jews, or Jews in the Yishuv [Palestine], would have been incredulous at the idea, later a commonplace, that survivors' memories were a "precious legacy" to be preserved.

This "precious legacy" is now reaping untold benefits (pp. 259-60): "A different kind of interest — often overwhelming students — is generated by the frequent visits of survivors to classrooms."

Thanks to the "important and influential role" Jews play in the media, it now often seems that one cannot pick up a newspaper without reading something related to the Holocaust. Novick has noticed this, too (p. 276):

> After having gone through thousands of newspaper stories on the Holocaust, I'm struck by how often the pathos of interviewing or quoting a local survivor was the peg on which such stories were hung.

Even so, Novick doesn't have a very high opinion (p. 275) of the typical survivor's testimony:

> ... it is held that survivors' memories are an indispensable historical source that must be preserved ... In fact, those memories are not a very useful historical source.

Part of the reason memories are faulty has to do with the passage of time, intensity of emotion, and many other factors. Novick goes even farther (pp. 68-69), to implicitly condemn the character of the living:

> Samuel Lubell wrote in the *Saturday Evening Post*: "For the Jews of Eastern Europe the Nazi gas chambers constituted a kind of grim, perverted Darwinism, psychologically and physically. Six years of systematic extermination ... bred a strange pattern of tenacious survival.... It was a survival not of the fittest, not of the most high-minded or reasonable and certainly not of the meekest, but of the toughest." "Often," wrote one local Jewish official, "it was the 'ex-ghetto' elements rather than the upper class or white collar groups who survived ..., the petty thief or leader of petty thieves who offered leadership to others, or developed techniques of survival." From Europe, a top leader of the American Jewish Committee wrote to a colleague in New York: "Those who have survived are not the fittest ... but are largely the lowest Jewish elements, who by cunning and animal instincts have been able to escape the terrible fate of the more refined and better elements who succumbed." ... And in David Ben-Gurion's view, the survivors included "people who would not have survived if they had not been what they were — hard, evil and selfish people, and what they underwent there served to destroy what good qualities they had left."

Shaking the Money Tree

Novick does make the connection between Jewish feelings of being outsiders and the Holocaust as a fund-raising tool (p. 165):

> The peaks of monetary contributions to Israel were in 1967 and 1973 when the Jews of Israel were thought to be on the eve of another Holocaust.

Jewish fund-raisers in America were quick to note this, and soon (p. 145):

> ... the Holocaust came to be regularly invoked — indeed, brandished as a weapon — in American Jewry's struggles on behalf of an embattled Israel.

He even goes one step farther, though, to show (p. 188) the cynical use of "the Holocaust" by Jewish leaders seeking funds:

> The millionaire who provided most of the original funding for the Simon Wiesenthal Center told a reporter that it was "a sad fact that Israel and Jewish education and all the other familiar buzzwords no

longer seem to rally Jews behind the community. The Holocaust, though, works every time."

Flexing Muscle

Novick can't find (p. 166) any proof that the Holocaust has had any effect on U.S. foreign policy, but acknowledges that (p. 155):

> The Holocaust framework allowed one to put aside as irrelevant any legitimate grounds for criticizing Israel, to avoid even considering the possibility that the rights and wrongs were complex.

He also recognizes that powerful Jewish interests in America will do anything to get their way (p. 167):

> AIPAC [American Israel Public Affairs Committee] ... has lavishly rewarded members of Congress who have supported Israel and ruthlessly punished those who have been critical of Israeli policies.

So here we have Novick, who believes that the image of Israel as "embattled" lead to the rise of Holocaust awareness, has acknowledged that the Holocaust is used as a weapon to deflect criticism (as well as gain advantages otherwise unavailable), and knows that pro-Israel lobbying groups are very effective in persuading members of Congress (and others?) to do their bidding, yet he can't find proof that the Holocaust has had any effect on U.S. foreign policy.

Lessons of the Holocaust

Novick implies (p. 253) that the Holocaust can sensitize us to other tragedies. After a couple of false starts at coming up with his "lesson of the Holocaust," Novick weakly offers (pp. 262):

> There was a disposition, before the Holocaust, to think of the most barbarous deeds as being the work of the most barbarous folk — the least cultured, the least advanced. We've learned from the Holocaust that that's wrong. Perhaps there are other lessons, but nothing that will fit on a bumper sticker, and nothing to inspire.

He believes that the urge to teach the "lessons of the Holocaust" (which he can't quite pin down) comes from the hope that out of it will come "something that is, if not redemptive, at least useful." However, he concludes, "I doubt it can be done" (p. 263). Nowhere does Novick, who lists some "good" reasons for remembering the Holocaust (pp. 239ff), point out the penalties for failing to do so.

Holocaust and Historiography

Novick's calm demeanor and nuanced approach crack only when he refers to Holocaust revisionists. Novick mischaracterizes revisionists as "deniers" who are a "tiny band of malicious or deluded fruitcakes" (p. 13), a "tiny band of cranks, kooks, and misfits" and "fruitcakes" (p. 270) who "deny that the Holocaust took place." Novick also claims (pp. 270–2) that revisionists would be inconsequential, had it not been for powerful Jewish forces who in 1993 used the threat of revisionism to usher in the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Throughout his book, Novick continues what has been referred to as "the long tradition of Jewish scholarship that deliberately distorts the historical record to further Jewish group interests" (Brian Chalmers, "The 'Jewish Question' in 15th and 16th Century Spain," Jan.-Feb. 1996 *Journal*). Because many of his points are couched so obscurely that trying to determine what Novick actually thinks often exasperates, what stands out most are individual statements. Novick's book — like Finkelstein's — is a gold mine of information for revisionists. Novick's approach to these datum points, however, seems so conscious of Jewish group interests that the book appears to be written only for other Jews.

To put a scholarly veneer over the gaping holes in his account of the Holocaust's rise to power, Novick claims (p. 261):

> If there is ... any wisdom to be acquired from contemplating an historical event, I would think it would derive from confronting it in all its complexity and its contradictions; the ways in which it resembles other events to which it might be compared as well as the ways it differs from them.

With regards to Holocaust claims, this is exactly what Novick has failed to do, aside from granting that it is (and should be) compared to other historical events. His lip service to historiography ends quickly, however, as he then writes (p. 261):

> It is not — least of all when it comes to the Holocaust — a matter of approaching the past in a neutral or value-free fashion, or of abstaining from moral judgment. And it's not a matter of taking a disengaged academic stance.

Does this mean that if you agree with what he and other Jewish historians say about the Holocaust, there's no sense in reining yourself in? Does this mean that anti-Semites and neo-Nazis would make fine historians of the Holocaust, as long as they don't "abstain from moral judgment"? Will one approach be deemed better

than another because it is more subjective? We can only wonder what Novick had in mind in juxtaposing these two statements.

Typical Effort

Not reflected in the cites above is Novick's systematic distortions of history, and of the roles of Jews in that history. Novick notes (p. 158) that Jews sometimes present themselves as the same as Americans (when they are powerless, or in need of help), and that they sometimes present themselves as being different (p. 159) or even superior (p. 170) when they are in a position of power. Even though he claims to be searching for reasons why the Holocaust came to inhabit such a vaunted position in American life, he completely fails to notice that Jews were essentially silent about Holocaust claims when they were relatively powerless in American society, and increasingly vocal about these claims as their power grew. Novick is blind to this phenomenon, which has given rise to the characterization of Jews as being "at your feet or at your throat." For him, the two positions are nothing more than two different, equally valid postures Jews might take at any given time.

Novick nowhere even hints that some of the problems between Jews and non-Jews might be due to actions of the Jews themselves. For Novick, there is no need for Jews to change any of their behaviors, and in fact, Jews must remain separate (p. 185). Novick seemingly accepts this, and offers (p. 189) a stunning example:

> ... a survey of American Jewish volunteer fund-raisers in the late seventies found three quarters agreeing that "I feel more emotional when I hear Hatikvah [Israel's national anthem] than when I hear the Star-Spangled Banner."

This supports one of the most common charges, that Jews are more committed to Jewish interests than the interests in the countries in which they live. Novick quotes (p. 182) Wiesel to this effect: "By working for his own people a Jew ... makes his most valuable contribution ..."

Important for Revisionists

One aspect of "the Holocaust" that comes through clearly in Novick's book is that there was never any intention of remembering Jewish suffering primarily as part of the historical record: there was always some secondary agenda tied to its promotion. Whether the goal was fund-raising, political power, Jewish unification, or all-purpose warrant and extenuation, "the Holocaust" was seen as merely the means to the end. (To be fair, this is little different from American Jews raising money for Israel, even though they themselves have no intention of going there.)

This book is not important because it reveals new details about Holocaust claims, or because it cites heretofore unknown documents, or because it breaks new ground in interpreting contemporaneous evidence. It is important because a Jewish historian has stated truths about the Holocaust and its use by Jews, the voicing of which by persons such as Ernst Zündel in Canada has landed in court, and even in prison. Revisionists have long since gone more than halfway in bridging the gap between what we know about the Holocaust and what we have been told. It's nice to see someone on the other side making an effort, no matter how small, to arrive at a more complete understanding.

Making Room for the Revisionists

The Holocaust in American Life by Peter Novick. Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1999. Hardcover. 373 pages. $27.00. Index, source references.

The Holocaust Industry: Reflections on the Exploitation of Jewish Suffering by Norman Finkelstein. London, New York: Verso, 2000. Hardcover. 150 pages. Index.

Reviewed by Samuel Crowell

In the past couple of years, two books by American Jewish professors have served to initiate public debate about the use and abuse of the Holocaust. In his 1999 *Holocaust and American Life*, Peter Novick, a professor of history at the University of Chicago, traced the evolution of the concept "Holocaust" in the United States since the Second World War. Norman Finkelstein, a

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Samuel Crowell is the pen name of an American writer who describes himself as a "moderate revisionist." At the University of California (Berkeley) he studied philosophy, foreign languages (including German, Polish, Russian, and Hungarian), and history, including Russian, German,and German-Jewish history. He continued his study of history at Columbia University. For six years he worked as a college teacher. Crowell's lengthy essay, "Wartime Germany's Anti-Gas Air Raid Shelters," was published in the July-August 1999 *Journal*, pp. 7-30.

professor of political theory at City University of New York, went on to take Novick's ideas several steps further in his *Holocaust Industry*, which stridently attacks the manipulation of the Holocaust for the financial gain of Jewish agencies. Neither book rehearses any of the traditional historical revisionist arguments, but in fact their focus on the abuse of the Holocaust, and its unnatural dominance in American public life, repeats old revisionist themes. More important, both books have begun to create a climate in which a more skeptical attitude toward the facts of the Holocaust will become possible, and that in turn will only work to the benefit of revisionist research.

A Thing Called 'The Holocaust'

Novick's point of departure was a mixture of curiosity about the extent to which the Holocaust was invoked in American life and skepticism about the usefulness of its dominant role. Hence his study is simply an attempt to reconstruct chronologically how the Holocaust was perceived from the Second World War to the present, and in this sense his book might be called a history of the idea of the Holocaust.

This creates some problems in the early chapters of his book, because Novick soon realizes that the idea of the Holocaust today did not exist in the Second World War, or even for some years thereafter. To be specific, until the late 1960s, whatever had happened to the Jews was subsumed into the general idea of "Nazi atrocities" carried out against all of the Third Reich's political opponents, by a very small circle of individuals, and almost entirely in secret "extermination camps" the knowledge of which was concealed not only from the world at large but even from the German people. As a result, when Novick claims that the Holocaust was or was not discussed in the 1940s or '50s, he is usually using a very expanded definition of the term that in effect includes the entire Nazi concentration camp system. This can be a little disconcerting to the reader when he compares Novick's statements to the footnotes that underlie them.

Yet this discontinuity tends to underline one of the book's strengths, which is that it succeeds in locating the creation of the idea of the Holocaust in the 1960s, and specifically in the time frame of the Six Day War of 1967 and the Yom Kippur War of 1973. This separation of idea and events is fruitful in many ways. In the first place, it makes it clear that criticism of the idea of the Holocaust can be separated from the events that comprise it: one can criticize the abuse of the idea without being a "Holocaust denier." But on the other hand Novick's citing of the concept in the 1960s also suggests that the re-evaluation of allegations of Nazi atrocity in the Second World War should be able to proceed without reference to the "Holocaust" at all.

A further value of Novick's placement of the birth of the Holocaust idea is that it helps explain the internal chronology of Holocaust revisionism. In a lecture to the first IHR conference in 1979, Arthur Butz expressed some wonderment about the fact that a number of independent researchers all reached similar revisionist conclusions in the same general time frame: the late 1960s and the early 1970s. But according to Novick's analysis, this coincides with the origination of the Holocaust concept along with its first widespread usage in international politics. It may be seen, then, that Holocaust revisionism was the natural complement to the development of the idea of the Holocaust itself.

As to the cause of the development of this Holocaust idea, Novick is much less clear. While recognizing the takeoff of the Holocaust idea at the time of Israeli emergence as a military power in the Middle East, he gives little credit to the notion that Zionist propaganda was consequential in its emergence, partly because he doesn't believe that America's policy towards Israel is shaped by the Holocaust. Moreover, since his emphasis is on the idea of the Holocaust in America alone, he is able to ignore the extent to which Holocaust imagery has always been central to Israeli politics.

By failing to deal with the evolution of the Holocaust concept in Israel, Novick is left with something of a mystery. He has a situation in which the Holocaust became prominent in the United States but only some twenty-five years after the events described under its rubric transpired. Novick attempts to explain this by suggesting that the Holocaust was repressed (a position he ultimately rejects), and tends rather to argue that it was suppressed, because, in the prevailing Cold War climate, it raised uncomfortable questions about the Jewish involvement in European communism. To the extent that Novick is able to support this argument by reference to the internal papers of Jewish organizations that were active in the 1950s in suppressing associations of Jewishness and communism in the media, he stands on firm ground. But it seems to us that a simpler explanation for the growth of the Holocaust idea in America would be that the Zionist conception of the Holocaust was simply exported here and took root.

Novick tends to explain the pre-eminence of the Holocaust idea in American culture in the last two decades by reference to "market forces" and the simple fact that "[Jews] are not only 'The people of the book' but the people of the Hollywood film and the television miniseries, of the magazine article and the newspaper column, of the comic book and the academic symposium" (p. 12). According to this argument, the prominence of Jews in the media makes Jewish concerns prominent. Further, American Jews have been led to see the Holocaust as the fundamental characteristic of their identity since the ordinary appeals to the Jewish life and religion have lost their attraction. In other words, the Holocaust is used as a kind of threat to ensure, in effect, that Jews remain Jews; because of the Jewish dominance in the media, the non-Jewish majority is constantly exposed to this message.

It is at this point of his book that Novick begins to criticize the inaccuracy and vulgarity of many Holocaust representations, including those of Elie Wiesel, and to decry the "mystification" of the Holocaust. Being a liberal humanist, as well as a Jew, Novick takes offense with such claims that the Holocaust is "unique" or that it "cannot be rationally comprehended" or that it cannot be compared to other instances of mass persecution and murder, in other words, genocide. In this respect, Novick puts himself at odds with the majority of Holocaust authors, including Deborah Lipstadt, who is singled out for criticism. (In a fascinating footnote, Novick reveals that the author of the term "genocide," Raphael Lemkin, implicitly endorsed the idea of comparison in the 1950s in his correspondence with German-Americans by suggesting that the postwar expulsion of the Germans was itself a form of genocide.)

It is certainly difficult for revisionists to disagree with Novick's judgments in these later chapters, especially since they are identical to the kinds of things revisionists have been saying for decades. However, Novick goes out of his way to dissociate himself from revisionism, calling revisionists "crackpots" and "fruitcakes" in his rare references to them. But then, Novick never asked himself why the Holocaust has became "mystified," "beyond reason," and "incommensurable" in the first place. If he had, he would have realized that these cliches represent an attempt to obscure the events and dissuade the skeptic or scholar from testing the facts and attempting to put them in a meaningful historical context. In other words, Novick's contempt is misplaced: in our view, the "sacralization" of the Holocaust idea occurred as a direct response to the revisionist challenge to the Holocaust on discrete factual terms. One may, as Novick does, object to the irrationality of Holocaust remembrance, but the substitution of reason for mystery is the essence of Holocaust revisionism.

Novick's book is important in several respects. It has allowed a wide public airing of many criticisms of the Holocaust ideology long made by revisionists such as Butz, Faurisson, and Lilienthal. It locates the emergence of the Holocaust as an idea at a specific point in time, incidentally helping to explain the chronology of Holocaust revisionism. It helps separate the ideology of the Holocaust from the disputed facts of the Holocaust, although it questions few of these. Finally, it helps create space for broader, deeper criticism of the "instrumentalization" of the Holocaust, as well as more critical thinking. Indeed, *The Holocaust in American Life* provided the actual springboard for Norman Finkelstein.

The Selling of the Holocaust

Late in 1999, Norman Finkelstein was asked to write a review of Novick's book, and that review, fleshed out with considerable detail and moral indignation, has become *The Holocaust Industry.* To understand Finkelstein's approach it is important to understand a few things about his background. Both of Finkelstein's parents were Polish Jews, who were deported from the Warsaw Ghetto and who survived a series of concentration camps, including Auschwitz and Majdanek. Finkelstein clearly venerates their memory and the sufferings they underwent. He also deeply honors the memory of his parents, who, by what he tells us, interpreted the suffering of the Jewish people in the Second World War in a universalist context. As a result, Finkelstein's main approach to the Holocaust is that the Jewish people should not be singled out as victims nor should the German people singled out as perpetrators. These are attitudes that Finkelstein has discussed elsewhere, as for example in *A Nation on Trial*, in which Finkelstein condemned Daniel Goldhagen's tract *Hitler's Willing Executioners* as a group libel on the German people.

Another characteristic of Finkelstein's thinking is that he is suspicious of all political elites, whether Jewish or gentile, and has always been sharply critical of Zionism. Indeed, Finkelstein first made a name for himself in the 1980's with his critique of Joan Peters' *From Time Immemorial*, a Zionist version of Middle East history which essentially argued that before the Jewish immigrants arrived there were no Arabs in Pal-

estine. As a result, Finkelstein has always been sharply critical of the manipulation of the Holocaust. Indeed, in *A Nation on Trial* he even went so far as to call the Holocaust as usually discussed essentially the ideology-laden Zionist "version" of the Holocaust.

Finkelstein benefits from Novick's distinction of the Holocaust as an idea as separate from the events themselves. In *The Holocaust Industry* he is now able to strongly criticize the Holocaust as a representation without having to get mired in details about the scope or methods of the Nazi persecution of the Jews.

In the first chapter of his brief book, Finkelstein gives his own version of the emergence of the Holocaust idea. Unlike Novick, who centers the idea in support for Israel, later to be overtaken by the utility of the concept in defining Jewish identity, Finkelstein traces the promotion of the Holocaust idea to its usefulness to the United States government and in particular to the "Jewish elites" (a favorite phrase) who benefit from such promotion with wealth and power. In this area, Finkelstein's analysis is a bit more convincing than Novick.

While he disagrees with Novick about the actual mechanics of the Holocaust idea's emergence, Finkelstein agrees with Novick, and goes much further than his elder colleague, with the idea that the Holocaust serves ideological purposes by casting the Jews as eternal victims of irrational gentile enmity. In this way, suggests Finkelstein, not only does Israel become immune to criticism, but so do any Jews, as they retreat into conservative positions to defend their vested interests.

In the following section, Finkelstein deplores the abuse of the Holocaust, and the "hoaxers" and "hucksters" who stand behind it. Repeating criticisms from his own writings, Novick's book, and thirty years of revisionist analysis, Finkelstein excoriates the various poseurs who have made a living off the Holocaust, among whom he lists not only Wiesel, but Jerzy Kosinski and of course "Binyamin Wilkomirski," the Swiss clarinetist who successfully passed himself off as a child survivor of the camps until recently exposed. He also allows himself to attack the various buzz-words of the Holocaust vocabulary, but, unlike Novick, is able to say something in support of revisionists, duly referencing Gordon Craig's defense of David Irving, and Arno Mayer's use of revisionist authors in his *Why Did the Heavens Not Darken?* (As we know, Mayer's bibliography referenced the writings of both Arthur Butz and Paul Rassinier, which in academic usage points to their respectability. [See the reviews by Arthur Butz and Robert Faurisson in volume nine, number three of *The Journal of Historical Review.*])

It is in the final section of his book, entitled "The Double Shakedown," that Finkelstein most clearly makes his mark. This long section, comprising almost half the text, is a relentless retelling of the means whereby a handful of Jewish agencies, without apparently any constituent support, used class action lawyers and the American media to in effect blackmail the Swiss government for $1.25 billion dollars. Then, Finkelstein goes over the story of how the same forces worked together to compel the German government to make yet another compensation deal, this time for $5 billion, ostensibly to be paid to the survivors, Jewish and non-Jewish, whose labor had been exploited in concentration and labor camps.

Finkelstein registers his disgust not just with the tactics employed, although his narrative contains much shocking detail of greed and cynicism: he also raises questions about where all these billions in compensation are going. For example, if the Volcker Commission established that the amounts held in dormant "Holocaust Era" accounts in Swiss banks were significantly less than $1.25 billion, one may legitimately inquire as to the ultimate destination of the remainder. Finkelstein makes it clear that he believes that these funds will disappear into the coffers of the Jewish agencies that initiated the action, or into the pockets of the enterprising lawyers they employed.

Finkelstein applies the same skepticism to the German compensation plan. This plan is keyed to estimated numbers of both Jewish and non-Jewish survivors. Finkelstein correctly notes that if the number of Jewish concentration camp survivors today numbers around 135,000, as the Jewish agencies maintain, they must have numbered half a million or more in 1945. But such a calculation, which accords with revisionist analysis, contradicts the very low estimates of Holocaust historians. Finkelstein concludes therefore that the number of survivors has been deliberately inflated, and that little of the $5 billion in German money will ever reach the elderly or destitute Jewish men and women who most need it.

Conclusion

Novick's *Holocaust in American Life* was a welcome addition to discussions of the Holocaust primarily because it succeeded in separating the concept from the events, which in turn made it possible to criticize the

seemed locked in a time warp: they fail to discuss any of the extensive revisionist forensic and documentary research of the past several years.

On the whole, *Denying History* is simply an expansion of what Shermer offered in his previous book: various vignettes about leading revisionists, speculations as to why they believe what they believe, without the slightest thought that they might be at least partly right. Shermer, as before, deserves praise for his patient, almost didactic tone when discussing revisionists, but, also as before, he falls far short in his efforts to provide any proof of what he alleges as fact. The sole novelty of the book comes from the presentation of additional evidence for mass gassing and the existence of an extermination program. But this evidence, as usual in Holocaust histories, doesn't really move beyond the implausibilities of the eyewitness accounts, and the supplementary detail in the end proves nothing, except, perhaps, the existence of a bomb shelter in the Mauthausen crematorium.

Lying about Hitler

Lying about Hitler: History, Holocaust, and the David Irving Trial, by Richard J. Evans. New York: Basic Books, 2001. Hardcover. 318 pp.

Reviewed by Samuel Crowell

Doubtless one of the more memorable episodes from last year's libel trial of David Irving v. Deborah Lipstadt was the lengthy clash between Irving, acting as his own attorney, and expert witness Richard Evans, the British historian, who had submitted an eight hundred-page assault on Irving's character and historical career. For eight days, Irving poked holes in Evans's arguments and tried to get Evans to support his positions ex tempore, while Evans, hands thrust deep in pockets, refused to meet Irving's gaze and read out long and stultifying passages from his report.

The present book is essentially Evans's memoir of the trial, accompanied by a condensed version of his expert report in support of Lipstadt, and his observations on the trial's aftermath. The trial, it will be remembered, hinged on Irving's claim that Deborah Lipstadt had libeled him in her 1993 book *Denying the Holocaust*, a book that was bankrolled by the Jerusalem-based Vidal Sassoon Center for the Study of Antisemitism. To bolster her defense, Lipstadt's supporters, including *Schindler's List* director Steven Spielberg, hired several historians to write reports that argued that Lipstadt's criticisms of Irving were justified. Some of the reports were professionally done and seemed objective, as for example the expert opinion of Christopher Browning, though most revisionists would disagree with his conclusions. On the other hand, the reports of Robert Jan Van Pelt and, in particular, Evans himself were so heavily interlarded with condemnations of David Irving it was difficult to separate legitimate historical analysis from gratuitous attacks.

Lying about Hitler suffers from the same problem. While this book is somewhat milder in tone than Evans's vociferous expert report, nevertheless the seeming compulsiveness with which Evans appears obliged to accuse David Irving of falsifying and manipulating documents gets in the way of whatever historical value this book may have.

The book comprises seven chapters. The first describes Evans's introduction to the Irving suit, the next two discuss Adolf Hitler's role in the "Final Solution," a further chapter discusses Irving as a "Holocaust denier," while a fifth considers the bombing of Dresden, the subject of Irving's first book. Two further chapters discuss Evans's testimony and post-trial perspectives. Of most direct interest to revisionists is the chapter entitled "Irving and Holocaust denial," in which, oddly enough, the kinder and gentler Richard Evans is most apparent.

For the most part Evans gives a fair treatment to revisionists, describing the writings of Paul Rassinier, Arthur Butz, Wilhelm Stäglich, and Robert Faurisson more or less accurately and with no evident malice. Evans avoids, for example, the rather silly name calling that mars Peter Novick's *Holocaust in American Life*. Nor does Evans rush to judgment in assessing the motives of revisionists: for example, Evans sees Rassinier's motives rooted not in anti-Semitism but in his actual experiences in the camps. This generally fair beginning breaks down rather quickly, however, for two reasons. First, because Evans is out to prove that David Irving is a "Holocaust denier"; second, because Evans is clearly out of his depth when discussing the Holocaust in any detail.

Evans tends to focus on such things as Irving's comments about the number of victims, or his ridicule of some claims. Armed with excerpts from Irving's videotaped speeches, Evans goes on to argue Irving's status as a "denier." Yet Evans' standards of what constitutes

denial constantly change. On the one hand, Evans stipulates that it is "denial" to claim a wartime Jewish death toll in the hundreds of thousands, but while Irving at one point conjectured a death toll between one and four million, that doesn't count, because many of these deaths were attributed to disease. Nor is Evans above pure ad hominem arguments: a lengthy section in this chapter consists of nothing more than detailing Irving's relationship with the Institute for Historical Review, which is also smeared.

On the subject of gassing, Evans is particularly weak. He claims that there is documentary evidence for gassing at the extermination camps of Chelmno, Treblinka, Sobibor, Belzec, and Auschwitz-Birkenau, thus contradicting Christopher Browning's expert report, which explicitly discusses the absence of such documentation, as well as Van Pelt's report, which references only a few ambiguous documents. Beyond this point, Evans simply repeats the standard anti-revisionist lore: how the Leuchter report has been "discredited," how much more Zyklon was needed to kill bugs rather than humans, and so on.

Evans' sole independent speculation on the subject of gassing falls completely flat. At one point, he tries to argue that the spurious "gas chamber" at Dachau is a non-issue for the general credibility of the gassing claim because "not even Irving claimed that the evidence presented at Nuremberg said that the gas chamber at Dachau ever actually came into use" (p. 124). In his footnote, Evans argues that "only one witness at Nuremberg claimed to have seen bodies in the [Dachau] gas chambers: they may have been moved there temporarily from the adjacent crematorium, which was used for executions," and quotes from what is apparently the Dachau tourist brochure (p. 286). Bearing in mind the actual content of Nuremberg witness Dr. Franz Blaha's justly famous affidavit, in which he claimed to have examined gassing victims, two or three of them still stirring, in the Dachau gas chamber (*Trial of the Major War Criminals,* Nuremberg: 1947, vol. 5, pp. 172-173), we conclude that Professor Evans is indeed qualified to discourse on the falsification and/or manipulation of historical documents, if only on the basis of personal experience.

There are many gaps in Evans's treatment of the gassing claim, particularly for Auschwitz. For example, except for a brief glancing reference in the conclusion, there is no discussion at all of the missing holes in the roof of the Crematorium II "gas chamber," without which any gassing in conformance with all received accounts would have been impossible. Nor does Evans bother to discuss the gastight air raid–shelter interpretation of the crematorium basements, even though it was an important part of Irving's defense, and even though it was discussed by all the relevant parties to the case. This leads to the most mysterious gap of all, the virtual non-existence of Professor Robert Jan Van Pelt in this book. In fact, Van Pelt is reduced to only one substantive mention, when he supposedly counseled Evans not to look Irving in the eye, because "[I]t'll just make you angry" (p. 199). Thus the expert who was the most highly paid, who covered the camp where the most people were supposedly gassed, and whose expert report most nearly rivaled Evans's in sheer bulk, is mentioned solely in connection with explaining away Evans's rude behavior in the dock.

Toward the end of the book, Evans shifts his sights away from Irving to those who defended him, both before, during, and after the adverse judgment. Here Evans drops his new-found civility and goes after any and all who have had the temerity to praise Irving, or to minimize his errors. This part of the book is amusing, if only when one reflects on the amount of spite and cheek needed to sustain these argumentative assaults on the likes of Sir John Keegan and several others. Donald Cameron Watt, another distinguished British historian, and much Evans' senior, comes in for particularly rough treatment, with several ambushes in the endnotes.

On the whole, the book contributes little that is new or interesting to anyone who followed the Irving trial with any degree of attention. It is obvious that Richard Evans has an animus against David Irving, but such animus could not sustain his expert report nor does it sustain this much shorter book. Furthermore, the title, *Lying about Hitler,* is a false indication of the book's scope: it is not about Hitler at all, but rather David Irving. Perhaps "Lying about David Irving" would be a better indication of the book's contents.

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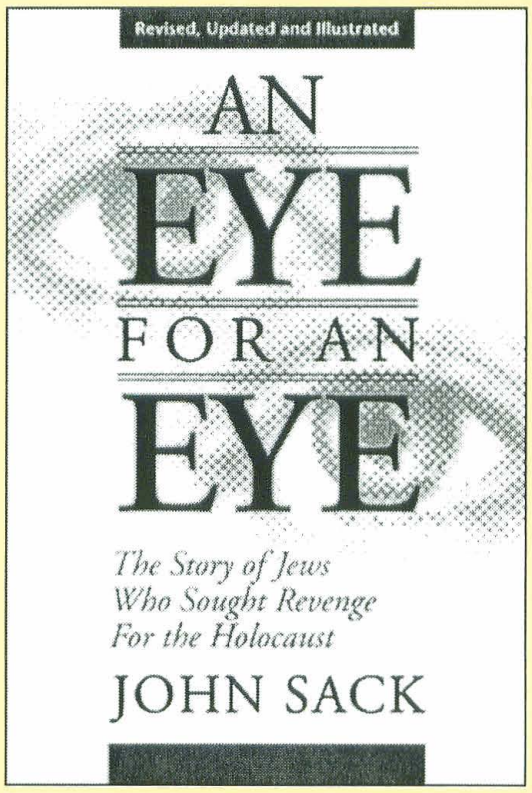

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